



FRONTISPIECE

PICASSO: *Fille au chien*

# TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

*edited, with an introduction  
and notes on the artists, by*

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FOR DAPHNE

**BOOKS OF PLATES.**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

**T**hough it is a bad bird that fouls its own nest, few people, I imagine, would regard the present century with unmitigated satisfaction. We cannot judge finally of the period through which we ourselves are living, and its outcome is not yet sufficiently defined for us to be sure whether it is Alpha or Omega, the end or the beginning. It may be either of these—it is probably both; but it is certainly not the middle of an epoch, not a continuation period like the eighteenth century in England. So we suffer from the disadvantage of having no unquestioned tradition, no settled way of life. There is bound to be waste of effort, loss of labour, distraction. Experimentalists fight pitched battles with traditionalists; there are false starts and dead ends.

Artists, the sensitive membrane of their age, are inevitably conscious of the strain of this position. What many of them say and do indicates that they are disposed to regard their time definitely as staging the end of something. They may not be agreed on what is ending—it may be the bourgeoisie, capitalism, individual freedom, or simply and finally all civilisation; the note of farewell rings equally for all these things. One scents even in the current overproduction of works of art a feverish anxiety to get something done, to put something on record before darkness and destruction engulf everything.

It is not to the purpose to decide whether this pessimism is rational, or whether it is in process of being falsified by events. It is sufficient to recognise its presence as a common factor, not only in the field covered by this book, but in the poetry of Yeats and Eliot, the music of Sibelius and Mahler, the novels of Mann and Proust.

A prevailing atmosphere of melancholy, the absence of a centre of faith or hope, is not necessarily an unfavourable situation for the artist. The masterpieces of English tragedy were written to just such an accompaniment in the Jacobean age. The artist may respond to it as a mirror—as Picasso has done with his “Crying Woman” (Plate 12). He may even be able to escape the conflict altogether—Bonnard is not the exponent of a deep tragic philosophy. But generally some marks of the situation are left in the artist’s handling of his medium or his choice of subject. Where the traditional forms still maintain their hold they do so with obvious effort; and by their side experiment strives to mould forms better adapted to express the spirit of the age, and to create that spirit anew.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

In the heroic days of the nineteenth century the visual arts—painting, sculpture, drawing—were taken to pieces and put together again. The twentieth century began fairly enough, with an upsurge of energy and hope even, with radical research and exploration of fresh horizons. The spirit spread to the other arts—music and literature in especial. What a fruitful, stirring time it was! Schönberg forsook the ultra Wagnerian romanticism of his youth for the revolutionary works culminating in the atonal style of “Pierrot Lunaire” of 1912, Gertrude Stein started her search for new literary form with “Three Lives” in 1909, and James Joyce commenced “Ulysses” in 1914. Guillaume Apollinaire wrote his poems and fostered the works of the cubist artists in the first decade. Matisse produced “La Joie de Vivre” in 1906 and Picasso “Les Femmes d’Alger (O. J.)” in 1907.

This creative wave has twice raised its crest only to crash twice on the reefs of the World Wars. There is a horseshoe pattern in the trend of the period. Before the end of the first two decades of the century there was a return from the outposts. Frustration had found an outlet in the cynical frivolity of Dada or a meek return to academicism. In literature “Finegan’s Wake” was stillborn, in music Stravinsky turned back from the jungle to classical string quartettes and in painting Picasso, Wyndham Lewis, Piper, to name but three examples, relented for a time from abstract subjects to freer themes. It is difficult not to feel regret at the passing of the revolutionary phase; the Promised Land was so fairly set forth and seemed so nearly in the grasp! No doubt the old Guard of Russian revolutionaries feel a similar nostalgia for the barricades, the secret cells and the political instability of their earlier days; but this retreat from the summits must be recorded in any impartial history of the half-century now closing.

The drawings collected here give, as a *multum in parvo*, a summary of the whole process in the visual arts. The academicism of John and Derain show tradition battling to maintain its hold or to re-establish itself. Picasso’s “Head” (Plate 4) and Klee’s “Incredulous Smile” (Plate 64) give, in a new language, experiences which are peculiar to the twentieth century. If they seem peculiar to us in more senses than one it is no great matter. There should be a sense of pleasing unfamiliarity about really modern art—it should tease us and draw us on like a dark alleyway leading mysteriously to the unknown in a deserted suburb.

We may rightly turn to drawings to savour the modern frame of mind, for a portfolio of them bears to a gallery of paintings the relation that a collection of epigrams bears to an anthology of verse. They are the sip of claret which gives the flavour of the whole wine. They reveal an artist, his quality and his whole style. Indeed they have many advantages over paintings. To the unmoneyed collector they often give the only possibility of direct contact with a creative mind. Unlike engravings, etchings and process reproductions, with which they share their reliance on black, white and tone, to the usual exclusion of colour, they are products of direct contact with the artist. No

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mechanical device has intervened between the hand and the paper: and each drawing is unique in itself.

Again, their production takes less of the artist's time, but may well involve more of his concentration. The media in which they are wrought are dry, straightforward and pleasant to handle—chalks and crayons cannot possibly smell like oil paint. Nor is their production confined to professionals. Business men and statesmen reveal the inner workings of their minds by drawing doodles on their blotters, and many mute inglorious Carracci practise their art surreptitiously but with great spirit on the walls of public lavatories. The products of such an activity, however tentative, cannot look like the manipulation of some horrible substance; and any large exhibition shows that oil paint may.

For all these reasons good modern drawings bear study. They are the minute cross sections of living tissue which can be placed under the microscope to determine whether it is healthy or diseased. There is little suggestion about them of the *trompe l'oeil* polish of the nineteenth-century finishing schools. In that alone they may be worthy to be put beside the products of the greater draughtsmen of the past, Parmigianino, Guercino, Rembrandt, Tiepolo. They have texture and emotion. Above all they have contemporary spirit. It must be of value to us to see ourselves in a glass, however darkly.

Yet, when all is said and done we do not want to peer into a gallery merely to study processes, whether ancient or modern, any more than we want to look at individual artists as representatives of "movements". Art does not preach to us or set us a history lesson; she entices and seduces us. Although we may need to live with her a time to experience the full force of her charm, the living muse has not abated in her fascination. And just as a lyric may surpass an epic so may a drawing surpass a painting. Merit indeed is the same in either form. We shall know from the concentration of means, from the rhythm and the satisfying realisation of the end in view, when we are in the presence of a master craftsman. The few drawings collected here, from the work of some twoscore artists who have battled with the twentieth century, give a hint of the quality and the flavour, the concentration and the originality, the variety and the intensity, of the representative draughtsmen of our time.

## II. FRENCHMEN; CUBISTS AND OTHERS

Paris has been a centre of European culture since the founding of its university in the twelfth century and it is the Mecca of modern artists. It is the magnet which draws all those who want to be abreast of their times—at least it was so until the hospitable shelter of New York became more attractive to those who foresaw the approach of another European cataclysm.

The drawings in this book are exclusively European in idiom, although the recent work of Rivera, Lipchitz, Feininger, Masson and others comes from America. Even Oriental drawing begins to wear the European style, just as the dinner jacket and tommy gun have spread their baleful influence throughout the East. This traffic of influences is, of course, a two-way affair. Bonnard has received the imprint of the Japanese print, and negro sculpture has its ubiquitous effect.

Europe remains an organism in spite of the constant civil warfare which has rent it and continues to rend it. It is a wounded animal, but a living one. France, Germany, Spain, England, Italy have all contributed to the heritage. By now it may well foster an overworked, overbred strain but it is a recognisable entity, and finally a continental, not a national one.

France is the Geneva to which all the builders of a new art language have come—Picasso the Spaniard, Modigliani the Italian, Ernst the German. But when we start to extract from this international melting pot the national characteristics of French art, as practised by Frenchmen, we must define largely in negatives. Drawing is in question, so we are precluded from counting in the unparalleled instinct of the French for colour. They have not the liking of the Germans for the expression of psychological problems in the plastic arts. Extreme emotion and the overburdened soul are the exceptions in their art; that is why Rouault is a solitary among them. Nor have they now the continuing English fascination for the mystery of nature, the pantheistic expression of landscape in her stormy and anthropomorphic moods.

There remain the essential, non-associative elements of art—pure craft and integrity of design. French drawing displays above all an interest in form, in style and in draughts-







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manship for its own sake. Every component of the designs falls into its appointed place in the pattern, guided by an inevitable sense of fitness in composition. Elegance and probity are the keynotes of the Gallic idiom. Above all the French have an unquenchable interest in ways and means, in experimentation and the conquest of new processes. They pay art the supreme compliment of taking it seriously. In England, on the contrary, the public discussion of painting and poetry is rare, almost regarded as indelicate. To do the popular prejudice justice, it must be admitted that the *obiter dicta* overheard in galleries are embarrassing beyond endurance. The café and the salon have yet to take firm root in our tongue-tied, inhospitable soil. But in France they flourish; artists have no inhibitions in laying bare the most intimate secrets of their craft. Like democracy, like justice, art cannot thrive without this free discussion. If the experimental urge dies, French art must die, and with it European art will come to grief.

At the dawn of the century Renoir, Rodin, Gauguin, Cézanne, Degas were working in ways still regarded as revolutionary. The impressionists were giving pride of place to those who sought for solidity behind the flux of appearances. But art had not yet reached the frontiers of its advance, and before long it was clear that newer objectives, yet more radical theories, were to come. In the van of every offensive since then has been Picasso.

## PICASSO

Although he is Spanish by birth and temperament it is natural to consider Picasso in the French school and at the head of it. When he was eighteen he came to Paris, and despite occasional wanderings, that city has been his spiritual home ever since. He began by working in the styles of Toulouse-Lautrec and other contemporaries. Since then he has been constantly unpredictable. The work of some great artists flows naturally from them, with no sense of effort or strain, and pleases invariably whether at high or low potential by its assurance and effortlessness. Such is the music of Mozart, the poetry of Shelley; such too is the painting and drawing of Picasso. The son of a professor of painting, he seems to have been born with a brush in his fingers.

The protean changes in his styles have caused some bewilderment, as he himself knows. Speaking of those who do not "understand" cubism he remarked that he cannot read English, but does not conclude that all English books are nonsense. This comment gives a clue to the unifying principle behind the discordant appearances of modern art. Artists can and may speak more than one language of art, the same ideas can be conveyed in more than one way. The dissolution of tradition can be compared to the disappearance, at the time of the Reformation, of Latin as a universal medium for

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literary expression in the cultivated world. Until the middle of the last century the people of Western Europe used the same official art language. Now they are divided—not according to geographical boundaries—into groups, each with its vernacular, of Post-Impressionism, Constructivism, and the rest. The official art language lingers on, as Latin did, in the schools and academies. It is still a possible mode of discourse, but obviously becoming more and more a dead language, useful only for homework exercises. The rest is a Tower of Babel. Many artists work in two or three of the languages with equal facility. Only Picasso is the perfect polyglot.

There is a literary analogy to Picasso's travel among styles in the later chapters of "Ulysses". In despair it seems at achieving a style of his own Joyce writes, with the aplomb of a consummate pasticheur, in all the prose styles hitherto evolved, from Bahu and baby language through Livy, Malory and Burke to journalism. But to make the analogy is to realise how misleading it could be. For the effect of Joyce's eclecticism is designedly to parody the life of Dublin, to show that it cannot be forced into other moulds without becoming ludicrous. Picasso on the other hand works with complete seriousness in a variety of non-archaistic styles for the expression of himself and the communication of that expression to us.

It is possible to trace the major shifts in Picasso's idiom through his drawings, which have indeed at one or two periods assumed a predominantly important place in his output. Earliest of those here reproduced, "Fillette au chien" (Frontispiece), is a preliminary study for a figure in a large canvas called "Les Bateleurs" (The Mountebanks). The completed oil painting is one of the most serene of the early works in which Picasso followed the happy-go-lucky vagrancy of these simple people. In his "Blue" period he lingered on the misery, the starvation and gauntness of their unanchored, uprooted lives. But, like the colour tone of this pastel, the mood was lightening as he prepared himself for the great creative and experimental spasm which led to the cubist period. The dog on which this charming little girl has her hand is converted into a basket when she takes her place among the mountebanks in the large picture. But they are in their own right a separate and pleasing picture of the "Rose" period; just as the company the girl belongs to is gayer, less meagre and starved than the creations of the artist's self-pitying youth.

"Figure, 1910" (Plate 10) takes us straight into the most arid period of cubism. To such an extent was Cézanne's analysis of all art into the cube, cone and cylinder taken seriously at this time that little indeed is left of the figure which is the nominal subject of the drawing except a few fragmentary, tilted planes and sections of curves. Equally in the "Head" (Plate 4) of fifteen years later the picture builds up out of fragmentary aspects of the theme. The cubist formula of presenting different facets of an object at the same time—an eye in profile, an eye in full face—is still at work. But the hard angularity of the earlier style has been softened away, rounded into gentler contours

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and ovoid forms. The result is an intense life in the drawing, heightened technically by the fierce interplay of light and dark. The drama is intensified by our uncertainty about exactly how many haunted, scared faces are watching and conversing with themselves. It communicates

“The notion of some infinitely gentle  
Infinitely suffering thing.”

The “Two Dancers” (Plate 5) belongs to the classical period between these two drawings, and to the time of Picasso’s association with the Russian Ballet; a consummate example of energy expressed through the nervous sensitive line that sees round corners.

Picasso’s art is alternately reposeful and dynamic. Just as the sweet and mellifluous tragi-comedies of Shakespeare followed the tragedies, so does his work viewed as a whole show how he feels the exhaustion of a mood, the need for rest. The large classical nudes, calm, gigantic, followed the disruption and intensity of the Negro and Cubist periods; and before the outburst which led up to the painting of *Guernica* he was for two years unable to work at all.

“The Idyll” (Plate 1) belongs to one of these comedic interludes, before the time of his complete exhaustion. Treated like this the old myths have new vitality in them. The hot summer day vibrates round *Amaryllis* and *Corydon*. The woman with bird-like hands, whose Roman nose haunts so much of Picasso’s painting and sculpture, leans back in an ecstasy of relaxed tension.

A tragic recurrence of circumstances has constrained Picasso to follow his great Spanish forerunner Goya in depicting the disasters of war in his own land. The Spanish Civil War of 1937–8 was a dress rehearsal for the second World War. It provided artists with all the material for imaginative contemplation that has since become sickeningly familiar as the portion of half humanity—mutilated bodies, shattered homes, and the common downfall of men, women and children in a violent and meaningless fate.

The mural painting of “*Guernica*” in which Picasso has expressed his horror at the crimes of war is itself a vast drawing carried out in black, grey and white. Many of the preparatory sketches for it have been dipped into the same bitter waters as the large composition and bear its full intensity. The “*Crying Woman*” (Plate 12) is one such. This is the face of the mother clasping to her bosom the mangled remains of her child, bombed to death. It trespasses upon feelings almost too intimate to render, and declares that there is no consolation; it is a gesture of despair and cries out in all man’s impotence at the grief too common to the race.

## BRAQUE

**G**eorges Braque, who was at the crucial moment of cubism a co-founder of the movement with Picasso, and whose works at that date are almost indistinguishable from his, has deliberately retained his field of expression within certain limits. No contemporary artist exemplifies better the French attributes of good order, fine proportion, the instinct for arrangement. His painting falls by subject into three main groups: the earlier analytical works of cubism, built out of fragments of guitars, wood-graining, letters and such elements; the later, freer still-lives; and, more recently, large monumental female nudes. He has traversed all these fields in his drawing. At all stages he has shown fearless technical ingenuity and a complete mastery of his craft.

The large "Nude" reproduced in colour (Plate A) belongs to the third of the groups. She is what Rossetti would call a 'stunner' among the small number of his more representational works.

"Verre et Fruits" (Plate 16) is representative of his approach when cubism as an analytical force was spent. Among the multiplicity of efforts lavished on such subjects these are outstanding. The objects, the three apples and a glass, have the animation which invests dead things in a painting by Kalf or Manet. Such effects of the inter-relation between light and the artist's spirit are a triumphant answer to the question 'Can these bones live?'

The "Design" (Plate 15) is carried out in a medium which Braque has rediscovered—incised plaster. By reversing the normal relationship of black to white in this method, which is a cross between drawing and engraving, he has recaptured the calligraphic subtlety, the naïve charm of classical vase painting and intaglio gems to a degree unthought of by Flaxman and the pedantic neo-classics of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Where their imitations were frigid and machine-turned his are happy and full of life.

## LÉGER

**B**y contrast with those who have flirted with other mistresses Fernand Léger remains completely faithful to the austere calling of cubist and abstract painter. To him the artist is merely a worker, an artisan whose craft is as dignified as, but not more so than, any other. Before he was swept up in the ferment in the Paris of 1907-1910, out of which sprang the cubist movement, he did some drawings of the female nude which show him striving to analyse the figure into its solid components at the imperious edict of Cézanne. Then came a period of turbulence in which he delighted to contrast the ponderous immobility of cubical forms with the swiftness, speed and

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dynamism of spheres and curvilinear shapes. After the last war his style became more calm and composed. Bits of machinery and other representative signs of the age found a place in his works, in arrangements where the recognisable objects are not there to evoke any emotion, but solely to take their inevitable place in the design. A housewife adjusting a cushion, a shopgirl choosing a belt of just the right shade to go with her dress, are for Léger expressing the common, instinctive search for beauty; and his work is a deliberate and carefully planned expression of the same instinct. When the human figure enters into his more recent work it does so as a piece of machinery, or wood turned on the lathe.

The drawing "The Compass" (Plate 7) belongs to this later period, having been made in 1925. The draughtsmanship, like the composition, is hard, austere and unforthcoming. No artistic sensibility, no sensitive seismograph, reveals itself in this hand. It is unfeeling, precise, exact, like the working plan for a casting. But the few elements of which it is built up, a book, a leaf, circles, rectangular forms, the compass itself are held together in a composition as carefully balanced and as skilfully arranged as a painting by Vermeer. Even the top line of the book is at right angles to the outline of the right-hand compass leg. Only the human values are completely absent. It is a blue print of an aesthetic problem, a plastic equivalent of Bach's "Art of Fugue".

## JUAN GRIS

The Spaniard, José Gonzales, who followed his fellow-countryman Picasso to Paris in 1906, and painted under the name Juan Gris, is far less austere than Léger or the earlier Braque. He is the most immediately attractive and lovable of the cubist painters. He was not tied down to a discipline or hag-ridden by the doctrinaires. His inventions are sweet, soft and informed by perfect taste. Particularly in his later paintings did he break loose from the rigid formulas of the cubist school, without forswearing any of the radical revolution they had effected.

The pencil portrait dedicated to Léonce Rosenberg and made in 1917 shows his cubist nonconformity pleasantly at work (Plate 3). The flat surfaces capriciously alternating between light and dark, the uncompromising tetrahedra into which the planes of the face are gathered up, are in the idiom of the school. But they are not used to destroy the subject, so that only a ghost of the sitter glimmers through the drawing as in a maze of shifting mirrors. Here they give strength and substance to the head, and do not obscure its character. He has allowed himself the luxury of enjoying the roundness of the head and the bust. The drawing is the portrait of a real woman, dignified and solemn perhaps, but rendered with sympathy, even tenderness.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

"Seated Harlequin" (Plate 8) hits the happy mean between representationalism and extreme radicalism. It is a study for a picture painted in 1920 and, as such, a ground plan for areas of colour. At the same time it is in itself a completely satisfying harmony of straight and curved lines, exciting the eye to the search for new delight, appealing as the universal magic of a maze.

## MATISSE

Nietzsche divides art into the Apollonian and the Dionysian—that presided over by the god of Olympian calm, and that informed by wild, primitive energy. In giving the palm to the Bacchae he obeyed his national traits. He also gave voice to the crying need of modern times, when savage instincts, suppressed and bolted down, crave for expression in natural outlets, in the dance, in orgiastic art.

Dionysos was the god of the "Fauves", young painters flourishing in France in the first decade of the century; a group, enthused with savage ideals, which included Derain and Vlaminck and among whom Matisse was the chief. When his inspiration is at its most intense, for instance in "La Joie de Vivre" which with Picasso's "Demoiselles d'Avignon" heralded a new dawn of French painting in the years 1906 and 1907, Matisse is worthy of that lineage. The drawing of a recumbent nude (Plate 2), where imagination has fused the vision of a moment on to the paper, shows the same fire burning thirty years later. The tense abandoned form strained in every muscle against gay vehement patterns is supercharged with life, and frankly animal.

The "Lady with Head-dress" (Plate 18) represents an Apollonian moment in his draughtsmanship. In contrast to the summary arabesques of the other drawing the subject is fully, almost nervously explored. Far from being a decorative pattern on one or two planes, it is that rare thing among his works, a portrait, an analysis of the character as well as the form of the sitter. But there is, in the delicate touches, the lace frills and decorated surfaces, the breasts ripe like pomegranates, that note he loves—not obtrusive here but subtly suggested—of the exotic and the oriental. The lady is a re-incarnation of an odalisque of Ingres, just as the style is a modern tribute to that master's drawing.

## MODIGLIANI

Modigliani came young from Italy to Paris and, after a life which might have been patterned on Murger's Bohemia, died with his message not yet fully communicated. He was a master in painting, sculpture and drawing, and perhaps in the



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latter sphere did he most of all achieve what he had to say. His style of drawing, predominantly in pure, subtle outline, has scarcely a parallel in grace, unless we go back to Parmigianino to discover one. The influences which went to form his mannerism were of course those impregnating Paris in 1905-1910, when he was a student there—Cézanne and negro sculpture. From them he learnt that balance of form is everything, truth to visual appearances only secondary, and they moulded the characteristic distortions which became in his hands the vehicle of such elegance.

The "Seated Nude" (Plate 14) has the completeness and the equilibrium of all his fully realised drawings. The slow, horizontal rhythm of its lines is oriental in its calm repose. The artist's collected enthusiasm and intellectual passion for the work under his hand is manifest; it nowhere says too little or too much. The subject bears about her that characteristic, almost virginal remoteness which is the keynote of Modigliani's portrayal of woman. She is in the world but not of it; transformed into something sculptural and more than human by the idealising incantation of his art.

The "Woman in Hat" (Plate 13) is typical of the summary sketches he threw off like a peripatetic café artist. Where the first drawing is concentrated, charged with reserved power, this is set down in a high velocity notation, but hits its mark none the less surely.

## DERAIN

Amid the welter of contemporary cross-currents, and the bewildering choice of ways open to the artist, there is bound to be a counter-revolutionary movement. In striking contrast to these "progressives", who have proceeded from experiment to experiment, is Derain. After a wild beginning with the group of "Fauves" when his manner was angular, gothic and exuberant, he has settled down into a style closely resembling respectability. He has become the apostle of craftsmanship, in its old-fashioned meaning, for its own sake. This academic intention, to the almost complete suppression of personal comment, is to be found in his later drawings. The large "Nude" (Plate 9) for example is almost terrifyingly aloof in its finish, in its flattery of the body it represents and in its balance. Such denial of the fortunate chance, such polish in the texture, are not common among the masters of twentieth-century draughtsmen. It deliberately seeks, like the Greeks, for a canon of the female form.

## ROUAULT

Rouault is independent of the schools, one who does not take part in the hue and cry of modernism but is recognised as a great and original modern artist. His position is therefore similar to that of Sibelius in music or W. B. Yeats in poetry.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

He is thought of first as a colourist, whose style derives from Daumier, and is obviously influenced by his early work as a craftsman in stained glass; but his black and white work loses none of the intense drama of his paintings and water-colours. The light in them, in pools between thick leaded outlines, glows as though imprisoned behind giant bars. His subject matter, inaccessible to most contemporaries, is religious: when he turns from God to man the manner so well adapted to mysticism and tragedy usually becomes satirical.

The "Portrait of Vollard" concentrates on the force and power of features well known through Cézanne's more objective rendering, and presents the face, as though on a Veronica's napkin, in a wash drawing of intense, but not histrionic, lights and darks (Plate 11).

## DUNOYER DE SEGONZAC

Dunoyer de Segonzac is the purest draughtsman among the French painters—the one of whom it could most easily be thought that his drawing is more important than his painting. If the beauty and fulness of a painting is of meridian summer, that of a drawing is of the depths of winter, and Segonzac has shown his realisation of this in his many records of the season

"When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang."

He is the master of much in little, of the pictorial epigram. He also watches and records the two main preoccupations of the French city dweller—"Le Sport" and "L'Amour"—catching for the former the fleeting attitudes of boxers and dancers and for the latter the nonchalant, seductive attitudes of girls reclining in the sunlight on the banks of a river.

In his choice of countryside he instinctively seeks out parklands, and the suggestion of a country house round the corner no doubt partly explains his marked appeal to English collectors. The landscape here reproduced (Plate 21) is typical in its delicacy and economy of means, comprehending in a summary etcherlike scribble the whole depth of the canal-side and the farmer's traffic passing along the sleepy village street.

The figure drawing dedicated to Roger Fry (Plate 17) catches him in a more gamin-esque mood, but the rushed uncourteous scrawls, blots and smudges cohere together in a form as solid and living as the model herself.

## JEAN COCTEAU

**I**n this age of specialisation, art, no less than any other occupation, is a matter for experts, for people blessed with a private income or brave souls who, despite its economic precariousness, give up their whole time to the job. Gauguin's life is a parable of how man cannot serve both art and Mammon. Drawing in itself, however, is, as we have seen, a branch of art which is less specialised than painting or sculpture, and many amateurs are, consciously or not, its votaries.

Few of these more modest practitioners ever bring their work to the notice of a wide public, unless, as with madmen and children, they become the subject of learned treatises and systematic enquiry. Among the exceptions one may class Thurber, whose spineless men and fishlike women add so to the humour of his tales and the point of his captions. A Frenchman among them who has won international recognition as a draughtsman is the poet Jean Cocteau. His accomplishment includes drama, narrative, poetry, criticism and collaboration in the ballet.

In his drawings this imaginative and versatile man is mainly an exponent of pure line, and of simplification. He uses the wildest distortions of caricature to produce his intended effects, without losing his strong sense of form or charm of effect. Motifs of which he is particularly fond are the classical profile and the flashing eye. The former recalls his connection with the Russian Ballet, which made such full use of classical themes in the twenties, and the neo-classical imagery of his plays on the old themes of Antigone and Orpheus.

The design for a preface of 1927 (Plate 6) is symbolic of the time with its gods, half statue, half alive, falling through the air. The giant mass of the forward figure, impending out of the frame of the drawing, menaces us as we look at him. It is Icarus falling from his flight or Phaeton cast down when driving the horses of the sun. It is a preface for the twilight of all the gods, who at that period between the wars seemed to have deserted men altogether.

## BONNARD

**B**onnard, who began to attract attention in that draughtsman's paradise, poster design, remains virtually a man of the nineties, an *Art Nouveau* draughtsman, who translates into his drawing the linear convolulus-like forms of that original though shortlived decorative style. Like Degas, he is an exponent of shifting viewpoints, the technique of Japanese prints with their subtle unoccidental frames of reference, their surprising and unexpected points of vision. In his choice of subject too he is of the

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

Ukiyoye—the “Mirrors of the Fleeting World”. He is above all a lovable playful artist: a simple soul of innocent eye and childlike vision recording delight in the lovely transitory appearances of the world immediately in front of him, the sunlight irradiating a woman’s body or the chintzy parlour, littered with knick-knacks, of a suburban house. He has no prejudices and no pompousness; he is the poet of the commonplace. He delights in the funny little urchins of the street, in pets (particularly mysterious witch-worthy cats), in the toy on a mantelpiece in an ordinary, unordered room (Plate 19).

The bathroom is a favourite place for his musings. The sketch (Plate 20) is one of many jottings or pictures in which he has studied the mermaid-like translucence of a woman’s body half under water; not for any tragic message like Millais’ *Ophelia*, but for the pleasure intrinsic to the sight itself.

### III. ENGLISH DRAWINGS

**T**he English have two insatiable lusts, one for doing things, the other for being out of doors. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do" is written in the minds of the race and on not a few backsides. Wordsworth's recognition of the need for lying fallow as a prerequisite of intellectual harvest is the more advanced wisdom which comes only to rare, philosophical, spirits among us. Bird-nesting, paper-chasing, riding to hounds, all the inevitable pursuits of the upper-middle-class youth in novels, which without parody appeal to all, without distinction of class, who can escape the towns, are the devices which bring our noses down to earth. The whole slant of the national upbringing is toward a paganism of animated Nature.

This craze for activity and the open air, transcending even passion, explains the frequent, almost universal, appearance of the folding water-colour set among the field equipment of the Englishman or Englishwoman at large. I had almost written abroad, but the recent disturbances in Europe have made it difficult to retain easels long in one place without their being upset or laying the owner open to the charge of sketching military secrets.

Restriction in movement is one of the factors in the close succession of artistic nationalism to economic nationalism. A generation ago no American novelist would write about the United States; now none will write about Europe. As the Channel Ports have remained open most of the time, the New English Art Club has been able to slip over to Dieppe, which is inscribed on its heart as Calais was on "Bloody Mary's".

But in the main the landscape studied and recorded by the most serious as by the most amateur among us has been confined to this soil. The range has shrunk from that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Cozens drew a haunting blue-grey veil, and Turner one of fire, over Italy; and when Chinnery, Lear, Bartlett, to name but three, ranged over Europe and Asia recording the world's outward form.

Where you look at Nature hardly matters if the quality of attention is right. The British Isles do not provide many instances of the sublime, but the present and past generations were in little mood to look on such scenes in any event. The homeland does provide the sense of an animated mystery, of a knowledge and intelligence which

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

antedates, and is superior to, man. It may be seen, as it was by the earlier generation represented here by Steer and Thornton, as essentially homely and irradiated by gay and kindly light. Or, with the significant turn in feeling of the younger generation, it may be shown, as it is by Paul Nash and Graham Sutherland, as the home of mystery, sometimes menacing and sometimes sinister.

In so looking at their own land the English are in the first instance poets and not, as the French, students of the science of vision. And, as they are conservative in subject matter, so they are in technique. The history of our art closely parallels our politics. Revolutions here are milder than abroad, and happen anything up to fifty years later. The older generation were content to use the mode of expression of Constable, Cotman and Claude even. Meanwhile the lovely textures of drawings by Blake, Samuel Palmer and the Pre-Raphaelites were coming back into favour. This with an amalgam of Picasso and the Post-Impressionists is the technical background of the newer school of British landscape draughtsmen.

Even so much attention to the products of foreign schools is a revived feature in our art. The English of the nineteenth century—perhaps schooled by Hogarth's protest against their whoring after strange gods—were as xenophobic as the Russians are now. They had fair reason to be, for in the landscape painters, and later in the Pre-Raphaelites, they had an art which was for export as well as for internal consumption.

Whether we choose to regard the turn English art took at the beginning of the twentieth century as a discovery of continental standards or a rediscovery of those current in the country a hundred years before, we must admit a complete break with the immediate past. The Pre-Raphaelites, with their painstaking thoroughness, their morbid cataloguing of detail, their medieval poetising, died without issue, as sterile as the trade guilds they sought to resuscitate. Only the academic drawings of Ricketts and Shannon, the washed-out fans of Conder, sought to continue along that path.

A more surprising failure overtook the idiom of Beardsley, who dominated the draughtsmanship of the nineties with his perverse line, his impish obscenity. The forced orchids of the Yellow Book could not weather the English climate when the fresh air of a new age drove out the *fin-de-siècle* fug. On Beardsley's death in 1898 his courtesans decamped with all their faded lilies and languid seductiveness to Central Europe. In England the way was clear for the modified reform policy of the New English Art Club.

## WILSON STEER

That Club, the progressive and vocal element in the art of this country at the dawn of the new century, was born in the eighties with the platform of an insular re-discovery of Impressionism. At the time it was founded Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat and the rest were embarking upon Post-Impressionism, which did not invade these shores in force till 1910. But the Club fulfilled its purpose of shaking up the Royal Academy and forming a focus for the vanguard of the national art. Wilson Steer and Sickert were among its earliest members.

Wilson Steer used to say that he could not draw. So far as figure studies go this self-depreciation need not be disputed. But in the craft of water-colour and monochrome landscape drawing which he practised when his eyesight was beginning to fail in middle life he conveyed the feeling for the English countryside which is the glory of his oil paintings. Atmosphere was his forte—rendering the evanescent colours of a hot day by the sea when solid forms melt away, or the shimmering of leaves inland under a warm breeze.

He is so ingrained a traditionalist that his work conjures up pleasant reminiscences of earlier English painters, but in no servile way. His drawing of a farmyard (Plate 22), for instance, recalls Cotman's use of flat washes. It is the sort of mossy forgotten corner across which the rambler stumbles on any country walk. It has windless calm, atmosphere and peace; its tone vibrates like a dull day behind whose clouds the sun's heat can be guessed at.

## SICKERT

Sickert is, at any rate in the aspect of his art best known to his fellow countrymen, a sort of pictorial Gissing. He has the Englishman's indigenous Dickensian love of low life and shabby gentility, of the characters to be found among mean streets, in music-halls and pubs. The *banlieue* have been cultivated pictorially by the French, especially by Seurat and Utrillo; but these artists are concerned entirely with the physical appearance while Sickert, who lived in, and became of, that milieu has also explored the atmosphere given to identifiable topographical districts by the men and women of the less fashionable parts of London.

Technically, Sickert's love of dark tones, of forms barely emerging from the murk that surrounds them, finds place in his drawings as well as his painting. He likes to use dark paper, brown or blue, on which the charcoal outline is scarcely discernible, the high lights picked out with white. His use of photographs, halftone press cuttings, and Victorian prints as models for many paintings does not mean that he did not work after



## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

nature. These adventitious aids to composition merely served as a starting point to his imagination. His drawings show that he could when he wished pay close attention to the world around him in its solid forms and real beings.

The "Nude reclining on Bed" (Plate 27) is a prototype of all the Camden Town pictures in which residents of the district characterised by that station on the Northern Line tube—clearly often no better than they should be—recline on bedsteads as an excuse for the painter's wizardry. The enigmatic titles only serve to distract from the actuality, the pure draughtsmanship of his work, in which rendering of form and interest in light are so well balanced. Like the washerwomen of Degas and the barmaids of Manet, but unlike the automata of Chirico and the goddesses of Picasso's classical period, Sickert's characters are definitely of this world; they have weight and form in an almost opulent degree.

His early desire to go on the stage, and Degas' cult of the footlights, dictated that other enthusiasm for the cheap and tawdry baroque of music-halls glowing with light from under the proscenium arch. The drawing of "The London, Shoreditch" (Plate 28) is one of many such oblong compositions—those of the Bedford, Camden Town, are the most familiar—in which from beginning to end of his career he conjured up the perennial glamour of the stage in all its manifestations, conquering but not disguising the strong vital stench of the pit-stalls. It is part of the secret of Toulouse-Lautrec's drawing that he makes unlimited use of the unaccustomed accents, the lights from below, which characterise the theatre, and Sickert has explored this to the full in his magical interiors.

## ALFRED THORNTON

Alfred Thornton, an early member of the New English Art Club, eventually became its Secretary. His sympathies were more than insular. Familiar with current theoretical developments in France as well as England, he was alive to the spirit of the countryside in either land. His muse was limited but powerful. "Last Year's Rick" (Plate 25) illustrates his responsiveness to landscape and his love of the dramatic juxtaposition of light and dark. The evening sunlight, the glancing rays beloved of Samuel Palmer in his etchings and glorified by Collins in the "Ode to Evening" where

"up-land fallows grey  
Reflect its last cool gleam"

fall almost horizontally across the fields, silhouette the decayed hump of the rick and throw into high relief the uneven texture of the ground. It was such moments of emphasis that he would portray in stark contrasts. The love of the agrarian so ingrained

## ENGLISH DRAWINGS

in our artists is not antiquarian or anachronistic but the result of a rational choice between alternatives, a preference for the fields and the labour which gives them their configuration. A used hayrick is to a farmland what a slagheap is to an industrial area. In violent contrast to Rivera's outlook, Thornton and Steer chose to interpret the outward shape and the inward spirit of the land, which is still the real factor in so much of the world's life.

This drawing shows that the mood of the bucolic, of Samuel Palmer's poetic vision of the countryside, is still possible in modern times. In such sketches Thornton achieved the largeness of vision which was his ambition and which he knew did not depend on the size or medium of the work. Not without reason have his drawings been compared to Claude's.

## AUGUSTUS JOHN

John is the great academic among contemporary English draughtsmen. Just before the twentieth century opened he won a prize at the Slade for copying a drawing by Watteau, and he has never discarded the mantle of the great designers of the past. Yet he is not the less a child of his age. We have only to think of Sibelius in music and Yeats in poetry to remember how tradition suitably modified can become as expressive of modern feeling as revolutionary or experimental forms. It is a tight rope dance, but one which John foots without a qualm. At his dazzling best he is a representative child of his time, of the first decade of the century, of which the *Weltschmerz* is reflected equally in his portraits and in the drawings of Picasso's "Blue" period. That sadness, which can be heard echoing behind the music of the period, may well be the knell of the culture which is passing. Like Mahler's boon companions in the "Song of the Earth", his figures say, with a poignant and haunting regret, "Ah, my friend, while I was in this world my fate was hard."

The "Portrait Head" (Plate 23) is a fine example of the application of tradition to psychological portraiture. Without a distortion the soul and character of the sitter shines through the eyes. Compared with Picasso's "Crying Woman" (Plate 12) it bodies forth the beauty that remembers against the anguish that forgets. To contrast these drawings is to measure the distance the age has run, in its search for new bottles to contain old wine.

While "The Portrait Head" is static and romantic, the "Study of Female Nude" (Plate 24) is dynamic and, to use a word less overworked in England when it was made than now, baroque. This picture recalls, but in no sense of pastiche, the early prize-winning copy, the studies in the styles of the Old Masters.

## WYNDHAM LEWIS

Wyndham Lewis is an exception to the prevailing tendency of English artists to lag decorously behind the explorations and experiments of the Continent. He was a prize-winning draughtsman, and all his working life he has been able and willing to produce drawings of traditionalist technique; in particular, careful delineations of portrait heads. But he early became infected with the ferment of those stirring days before the last war, when youth was all for revolution, for novelty, for uprooting ancient prejudices and marching forward to a new and promising country. How their desire for change was met, and precisely how much of the Brave New World was founded, we are now in the way of knowing. The results do not detract either from the merit of their dissatisfaction with the stale repetitions of what our fathers have done before us, or from the achievements which flowed from that mood.

Describing it as a revolt against Futurism, but really as a personal version of Cubism, Wyndham Lewis launched the Vorticist movement with a great deal of *éclat* in the fateful year 1914. Despite the adherence of such artists as Gaudier-Brzeska and Wadsworth, the movement and its propaganda were mostly his own work. Lewis has from the first been ready with his pen to defend what he has drawn with his pencil. He occupies an assured place in the literature of the time as a satirist, despite some uncertainty as to what he is attacking and on what principles. The close attention to external appearances required of an artist in some way accounts for his facility in this other art.

Stylistically, Vorticism tended to a more complete abstraction from nature than analytical cubism; but it was not the pure abstract art, with no dependence on Nature, which led to the work of Mondrian or Ben Nicholson. "Cactus" (Plate 31) was drawn before his style had reached its full obscurity. This drawing is a metaphysical conceit, playing on the resemblance of the plant to the human form on the one hand and to negro sculpture on the other. The stylisation in the hair of the figures in the craggy landscape to look like thorns is the pictorial equivalent of a pun. The satiric vision never very far absent from Lewis' work is present in these ungainly attitudes and grotesque forms of a man and woman conversing on a mountain to the sound of the horn. It is a pungent comment on the forthcoming age of jazz: and it still has the strangeness of a modern thing although over thirty years old. Despite the angularity of the forms and the violence of the design it is, unlike Léger's "Compass", not insensitive in drawing. It is menacing and outlandish in its remoteness: suggesting the mood—to quote Eliot again—of

"This is the dead land  
This is the cactus land  
Here the stone images  
Are raised, here they receive



DAVID JONES: *Petra im. Rosenhag*



## ENGLISH DRAWINGS

The supplication of a dead man's hand  
Under the twinkle of a fading star''

and also of

''Here we go round the prickly pear  
At five o'clock in the morning.''

## PAUL NASH

As the careers of so many modern poets show, the lyrical gift is one which often dies young. But in Paul Nash, whose earliest drawings were illustrations to his own verses, the illuminating light of the imagination has grown stronger with the years. The technical alarms and excursions of thirty-five years have all been grist to his mill—post-impressionism, cubism, surrealism—the last especially since it put into words a theory he was already in effect often practising. But the means have never in his eyes outweighed the end, and that end is a poetic one. It was of particular advantage to him to outgrow the rigid geometricism of his middle period. The objects in his pictures are not solely indicators of his mood, much less dummies in a still-life; they are heightened images which throw on to the scene the light which never was on land or sea. The wreck of an aeroplane on a lonely shore, a meteorite, an avenue of trees by a stone column in moonlight, all these rendered in his precise handwriting are pictorial metaphors. In spite of the strong emotion which presides over these assemblages his art is not primarily subjective. It seeks for solidity of form and construction and is rooted in real, recognisable places.

There are juxtapositions which create their own logic. The famous meeting of an umbrella and a sewing machine on an operating table is forced and artificially symbolic. But all natural objects cohere together by their own sympathy. The unity of pictures by Paul Nash relies on that sympathy, and they are held together in a form of music.

''Stone Forest'' (Plate 30) belongs to the series of drawings which, made in the middle thirties, take as their starting point the prehistoric stone monuments of England, and bring them startlingly, clearly up to date. The inviting burrow in the foreground (unlike a hole in Moore's sculpture in that it does not pass through to the other side) reappears in a drawing of two years later as ''Earth Home or the Fortress'', and so attracts to itself the mood of those Munich days—the craving for shelter and escape.

''Flight of the Magnolia'' (Plate 26) is a work in which the menace, the brooding tension of the war has passed. Nash's reaction to this war has been as pronounced as that which made his last war pictures classic, but far more philosophical. This drawing resembles in form those splendid objective drawings of moonlight voyages, ''Flying against Germany'', ''Hamptons at Sunset'' and the rest of his work as an official Air Ministry artist; but in place of the instruments of death is the promise of Spring, the symbol of resurrection.

## GRAHAM SUTHERLAND

**I**n retrospect the animistic period, when nature was peopled in man's mind with living things, appears a golden age. We like to think of personifications in nature as genial and pleasant; the water nymphs are kindly, the dryads of the trees are gay. But the pagan, whose science in these matters was so much more profound than ours, knew that the spirits which inform the world are often enough sinister and evil. Nature lay in wait and crouched; the Eumenides had to be bought off by flattering names.

The trend of this age to pessimism has made artists receptive once again of the influences and implications of primeval presences. Graham Sutherland has perceived that the *genius loci* is often hostile and unfriendly. The mossy stones, the gnarled roots and the age-old hills of his vision are alive and menacing, informed with a wisdom more primitive than man's and certainly not soft-spoken or consoling. He is the interpreter of this drama in the prehistoric fields, ancient trees and weathered rocks.

His etchings, which prepared the way for his characteristic mature manner, had caught the light reflected from the thatched barns, the sheep folded at evening of Milton's verse. In "Blasted Oak" (Plate 29) the lights and half-lights force their way through the intense black as in an etching. The form is, as so often we see it in the woods and by the roadsides, purely anthropomorphic. A withered root clutches, like an agonised claw, at the dark: the shattered bole opens like a mouth uttering a final cry of pain. This is the modern vision of nature, a sinister pre-human force straining to make itself articulate.

## DAVID JONES

**R**oses have been exiled from poetry since the writers of the nineties over-indulged their symbolism. Few representative modern artists have been able to make loveliness—in old-fashioned terms, Pure Beauty—the object of their search. Intellectualism, satiric intention, fear of sentimentality, the horrid object lesson of the Royal Academy and its foreign equivalents, disturb their line and trouble their vision of the Platonic forms. Yet David Jones has been able to avoid all these pitfalls without degenerating into a tasteless lushness. His style of delicate washes over pencil drawing recalls a posy of wild flowers or the petals which fall through the fingers into a pot-pourri jar. We feel with Marvell on looking at his drawings:

"Stumbling on melons, as I pass,  
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass."

For all its richness his work stands up robustly to actualities, just as his prose faces, and draws a lyricism out of, the grimmest facts of war. His landscapes can be real,

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immense and filled with a rushing mighty wind. "Petra im Rosenhag" (Colour Plate B) by its title links the sitter with the sweet Madonnas of the primitive German school. To be profound, portraiture need not be gloomy or puzzling, and this is a portrait which surrounds its subject with flowers and reads to the depths of her soul.

## CHRISTOPHER WOOD

Contemporary activities of all kinds often call for too much cerebation. All professions, all trades even are sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. The pious activity of putting away our dead is not now the occupation of Antigone, but is presided over by a college of morticians, and retail salesmanship has become a subject for a degree and even a philosophy. Art has not escaped this preoccupation; in many modern works the explanation is a necessary prelude to the delight. It is all the more surprising to find among our modern artists some who combine *naïveté* of approach with freshness of vision. Such was the appeal of the Douanier Rousseau and the other "Maîtres Populaires de la Réalité", such also is the appeal of Christopher Wood. He kept his instinct fresh and developed his natural talent for painting and drawing before his youthful *joie de vivre* could be clouded by the doubt engendered by the schools.

His favourite subjects were found among the folk where life is still lived simply and in accordance with some form of tradition—particularly in fishing villages, amid the sea light, the bright shapes of a coastal settlement in Brittany. These were his spiritual home.

Gauguin also was drawn to this region of France as a first stage on the long road of exotic wandering which was to be his lot. For all his sympathy with the modes of life which are falsely called savage, it is difficult to believe on seeing his early pictures of the Brittany peasants and their faiths that he was not mocking or caricaturing them. Christopher Wood on the other hand entered into their simple lives with complete sincerity. He felt something akin to the desire of D. H. Lawrence for unsophisticated life as a panacea for the evils of over-civilisation. The "Village Fête" (Plate 32) is bathed in this peaceful light of sympathy and calm. If the chief actors in this charming scene are like the classical figures of Picasso in their vesture and their monumental pose we cannot think that the style falsifies the theme.



## IV. DRAWINGS BY GERMANS AND AMERICANS

At the advent of National Socialism German art lapsed under official direction into an appalling and pallid academicism. It is not political prejudice only which keeps Hitler's water-colours out of this collection. For the past ten years or so German art concerns us only as an émigré movement in Switzerland, France, England and America. Before the débâcle it pursued a course which dutifully followed in technique the latest French movements, but was distorted by that dense refracting medium which makes it possible to generalise about "the German spirit". The *Geist* is characterised, among artist and critics alike, by a predilection for morbid and hysterical states of soul, for exaggeration of statement and respect for vague metaphysical concepts. The word *Ewigkeit* does duty for a great deal in their poetry and philosophy of art and they are too easily

*"Surexcité par Emporheben  
Au grand air de Bergsteigleben."*

The unfair permeation of art by literature has often been called the besetting aesthetic sin of the English. That charge misfires often enough, for the most abstract work has some narrative or poetic content, and illustrations most bent on showing that every picture tells a story have some purely plastic, formal qualities. As the drawings of Cocteau suggested it is encouraging that the frontiers between the lands of the Muses should be overrun. Michelangelo's sonnets are a unique comment on his personality and his sculpture. Bröwning in "One Word More" almost rates Raphael's "Century of Sonnets" above his painting, and Dante's drawing of an angel above his poetry; but the judgment is unchallengeable, since the two works in question are lost. In the present day Picasso has contributed some surrealist verses on the Spanish War. But as between nations, nothing could exceed the German artists' addiction to literature. Barlach in particular and also Kokoschka count as dramatists. Lehmbruck wrote several verses, including a meditation on death shortly before his suicide. One result of this dual interest was the excellence of German stage craft. And when the artists do not follow out their literary impulse by the full use of verbal forms they give vent to it in the titles and themes of paintings.

## DRAWINGS BY GERMANS AND AMERICANS

The characteristic mode of twentieth-century German writing and painting is Expressionism. The keynotes of this movement are unfettered striving, youthful enthusiasm, a revolutionary outlook. Historically Matisse was one of the first painters to be specifically described as an "Expressionist". In that sense the term is also a useful equivalent to "Impressionist", and may be equivalent to the barbarous compound word, beloved of English critics—Post-Impressionist. But the link with the German literary movement is closer than that. When it was still not fashionable for a picture to tell a story German Expressionist art would depict a harrowing or ecstatic situation and wring the last possible ounce of emotion out of it.

The Norwegian Munch was responsible for this development in Germany at the start of the twentieth century. He was drawn to pathetic scenes, overworked nerves, feelings on edge. In his Nordic way he probed far into the psychology of painful situations—a cold and morbid blast from the mists out of which Ibsen and Strindberg had appeared to jolt the European consciousness from its narrow complacency; and to the Germans it was deep calling unto deep. The use of exaggerated forms and wildly disordered design was a natural consequence of the Expressionists' intentions, and the formal discoveries of the *Ecole de Paris* lay at the artists' beck and call, the very instrument required.

There is not as yet a specifically American national idiom, and as Feininger, Grosz and Pascin worked in Germany for much of their careers, and took the imprint of their styles from that contact, it is convenient to consider them, with Tchelitchev and Rivera, here.

## NOLDE

Emil Nolde was for two years a member of the "Brücke" Group, which was the German response to the discovery of Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and negro sculpture.

The Germans are sensitive—almost self-conscious—about the effect of locale and birthplace on an artist's sensibility. To his origin in the extreme north of Schleswig-Holstein is attributed Nolde's uncompromising Nordic strain, his very Gothic mannerism. Be that as it may, a favourite symbol of his is significantly enough the mask. When he draws a face it too becomes a disguised thing, a mask. The rediscovery of the sinister fascination, the incantation exercised by these features fixed in an unmoving expression of joy, sorrow or calmness, whatever may be passing in the soul, is a thing of the twentieth century. It is associated with the stage in which the German Expressionist movement in literature and design achieved its consummation. It is also the point at

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

which Greek and negro art meet—for the latter always treats the human countenance as a mask.

The masks of Nolde take on at times a grimace—of religiosity in his biblical pictures, or of caricature as in the sketch reproduced at Plate 34. This essay in a lighter vein is a welcome relief from the brooding negroid forms and the symbols of intense emotion which express themselves so constantly throughout the period; it is a moment of genuine human sympathy with the common and the earthbound.

## ROHLFS

Rohlf's was over fifty in 1900, but he was carried away to such an extent by the rejuvenating spirit of the new age that he outstripped in achievement many of his younger contemporaries. He had within him reserves of emotion and desire which were awaiting this release; he unlocked his heart with the key of Expressionism. His unbridled energy sought out not only the drama of human forms in conflict, opposition or defeat, but the unspoken force of nature, whether caught for a moment in a vibrant still-life, or through a "vergeistigte" landscape. The wind of the spirit blows through the drawing of the "Convent at Andechs" (Plate 35) filling the foreground with a divine afflatus and emphasising the contrast of the silhouettes, the mass of trees half hiding the fairy-tale building.

## KOKOSCHKA

Kokoschka is of Czech origin, but before the Nazi régime his artistic contacts were Austro-German in the Viennese school of the secession led by Klimt which, among other things, induced Schönberg to try his hand at modern painting and to modernise his music. His affinity with literary expressionism was early announced in a drama he wrote in 1906 called "Murderer, the Hope of Woman", an ecstatic mystery on the sexual conflict between man and wife. Expressionism eventually took shape as a self-conscious movement round the adherents of the periodical "Der Sturm" which was founded in 1910. To this Kokoschka contributed many drawings: a series of portrait heads, illustrations, and pictorial comments on literary contributions.

He possesses the innate facility of catching the immediate, fleeting likeness. His portrait drawings are of quite exceptional accuracy, as for instance the "Portrait of Yvette Guilbert" (Plate 37). This remarkable personality is most familiar to us through Toulouse-Lautrec's eyes and yet she could not abide his mordant presentation of her.

## DRAWINGS BY GERMANS AND AMERICANS

Kokoschka touches her off in a more mature period of her dazzling career. Actors and actresses, extrovert always, fascinate us in their portraits, as in real life, more than notabilities of great worthiness but lesser personality. Kokoschka's portraiture proceeds along cranial lines, combining profiles, laying bare, as it were, the bones in the sitter's skull, and epitomising character in expression. Guilbert's piercing eye, ironic nose, mordant mouth, are all noted down and given their full weight.

Plate 39 is an illustration to his own drama, "*Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen*". Visual representation is more immediate, and therefore more actual, than poetry, which with its use of metaphor and symbolism stirs through vague (and in expressionist drama they are extremely vague) associations. This powerful drawing goes vividly to the heart of the drama and makes immediately intelligible its atmosphere of cruelty in sexual strife. So candid an exploration of the subconscious could only have been made at that time in Vienna, birthplace of Freud's work, and the repository of so much of the *malaise* in the modern world. What is most remarkable in the drawing is its anticipation of the themes of the surrealists and the later manner of Picasso. At a time when the French were embarking on the logical analysis of form or the exploitation of "pure" art, and recognisable subject matter was officially barred from aesthetics, this young man was tearing at a central truth in human relationships. Only D. H. Lawrence among the moderns has dealt equally frankly with the hard core of opposition, the sadistic impulse in the centre of love.

## KOLLWITZ

The daily cartoon in the newspapers is a familiar instance of the use of art for propagandist purposes. The intention of this minor art form is often serious; it pillories political parties or a calamitous situation, and frequently eschews the method of caricature. Käthe Kollwitz is a supremely serious propagandist who uses her draughtsmanship for the same purpose as the daily cartoonist and, after making due allowances for the difference in quality, in the same forms. Hers is a typically feminine art in its lack of proportion, its obvious incompatibility with a sense of humour. But she looks steadily on situations of real life which most people prefer to turn away from—on starvation, bereavement, the savage agonies of poverty.

The place of horror in art is likely to be much discussed in the coming years. The horrors of war, which are the horrors of peace multiplied, exaggerated and brought to everyone's door, must necessarily urge artists to record and comment, to express their indignation and their scorn. But the blinding of Gloucester on the stage, the presentation of the dead man's hand to the Duchess of Malfi, give a shock which freezes up the emotions and inhibits any aesthetic response. The most vivid German pacifist propa-

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ganda after the last war in the hands of Grosz and Dix failed because of its extreme outspokenness. To be effective, to stir with pity as well as terror, there is a degree of actuality beyond which the image must not go. Kollwitz does not pass beyond that line in the typical drawing "Mother and Child" (Plate 33), one of a series where love and grief are measured out against the emaciated face of the mother, the agony of the child. The subject, the treatment, give a new twist to the emotional assault of the original modern essays in this genre, such as Munch's "Sterbezimmer".

## GROSZ

Grosz is another propagandist, an artist like Hogarth with the difference that Hogarth directs his satire against the individual, who, he implies, is responsible for his or her own misery, while Grosz indicts society. Individualism and free will in their eighteenth-century meaning have gone. If we are wretched and unhappy, it is because someone else has made us so.

Therefore the method of Grosz is one of caricature. In a technique of montage derived from the Dada period he pillories the bourgeois world, complacent rich men taking their food and their women with a self-satisfied grin, repellent in their turnout, their smugness. Over against this, in withering contrast, he shows the underworld of wretchedness and misery—the underworld which is the subject of Käthe Kollwitz' drawings—but more sordid, less redeemed by human strength and dignity. Where she draws to the fount of pity he moves by an appeal to horror. To turn direct from Modigliani's imperious calm to a typical drawing by Grosz, such as that shown at Plate 41, gives the same shock as coming from the brilliantly lighted foyer of a fashionable opera house to the murky pavements thronged with beggars and prostitutes.

The element of purpose behind these drawings is too strong for them to be completely satisfying. They do not aim at being pleasant but they are effective, and they are necessary in the way a purge may be necessary.

## FEININGER

By pushing the tenets of the cubist theories to their logical conclusion Feininger has reduced drawing to its scaffolding. It is remarkable to find how individual and characteristic is the style in his refined and sublimated art. His scenes disintegrate like a Constructivist stage set, straight lights fall across them; they are graph papers into which the human spirit has trespassed.

## DRAWINGS BY GERMANS AND AMERICANS

In an art which is so rarefied and moves within such fine limits the smallest details are of consequence: thus in the drawing "Paris" (Plate 36) the spreading of ink on wet paper serves to give depth and to define the planes. For all its apparent simplicity and seeming disingenuousness, there is in this drawing the whole atmosphere of the metropolis, of tall apartment buildings crowding together in the street: it is a visual "*Sur les toits de Paris*".

## PASCIN

Drawing as a craft still makes its most extensive and popular contact with the public as a vehicle for humour, whether through the comic strips of American newspapers, in the animated cartoons of Walt Disney, or the more sophisticated sketches of weekly or monthly periodicals. Almost anyone, from the schoolboy ornamenting the margins of his Latin primer onwards, can command pen, ink and line to the extent required by cynical, satirical or ludicrous comment, and by the same universality everyone understands a caricature or cartoon. With its summary statement, its immediate conveyance of a situation to the eye, the work of the comic artist is a visual form of wit. It has special virtues of its own for that reason. The pages of *Punch* are well recognised as an indispensable history of English manners and customs during the last hundred years. Certain foreign papers have made a more thoroughgoing attempt to combine graphic quality with topical humour—*The New Yorker* and the German magazine *Simplicissimus* among them.

Pascin got his start as a staff artist for *Simplicissimus* while yet in his teens, and throughout his wider career as painter and draughtsman never ceased to exercise the journalistic eye evolved by that training. The two ladies of a certain class seated with speaking eyes among the palm trees (Plate 38) bear witness to his instinct for skilful elisions, for the shorthand which sets out the most telling and significant detail. With that means he lovingly recorded the life of Europe and America at work, at holiday, or, by choice, in the erotic intimacy of the boudoir.

## TCHELITCHEW

Seeing pictures in the fire was, like drawing, born in the caves, a pastime as old as man. Leonardo da Vinci advocates this help to free association, with gazing at the cracks in an old ceiling or wall, as a stimulus to the visual imagination. Trick designs composed of multiple images have long been an amusement for children, but it has been left to the twentieth century to derive from them a system for art of the most

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

serious intentions. Dali, Masson, Ernst, in their several and distinctive ways have enlarged their work by this method, cramming many meanings into one design, filling it with ambiguities and overtones. Tchelitchev more than anyone has based his work on the idea of multiple images. The puzzle in the "Study for the Blue Clown" (Plate 40) is to find a clown on horseback, another balancing a ball, one tumbling through a hoop, a profile, in the main figure. These images of the clown's active life, woven with great plastic skill into the drawing so as not to overload it or distract from its chief subject, give an atmosphere of greater psychological reality to the representation, a marginal gloss on the text.

## RIVERA

No survey of modern art could be complete without reference to its use as propaganda, which has already been encountered in the work of Kollwitz and Grosz. The use of art with this aim had so far fallen into disrepute by the beginning of the century that the resuscitation of the mode might fairly now be called an experiment. Art for Art's sake had been all the cry. Yet art has often been the vehicle of definite purpose. Egyptian and Baroque art only need be cited as examples of its use for political or religious advertisement.

As might be expected the more aggressive political forces have in our day turned to this medium. Rivera, the most conspicuous figure so far to have arisen from these efforts, has undisguisedly used his art as a method for furthering Communist propaganda.

The method of social realism has at one time been the official art policy of the Soviet Union, and has naturally influenced all those artists who are sympathetic to that creed, and who seek by their art to change the shape of things entire. I take the theory of social realism to mean the portrayal of things as they are with sufficient obvious comment to make the spectator applaud them if they appear, in the artist's view, laudable, and to condemn them otherwise. In that construction the propagandist novels of Dickens, and equally the paintings of Cruikshank crusading against the evils of drink, are in the tradition of social realism. So for that matter are the works of Picasso's "Blue" period, though the outcasts they represent wandering hungry and meagrely clad by the sea are not the industrial proletariat but the depressed fringe of the peasantry.

Rivera's paintings in the Institute of Fine Arts, Detroit, of which one of the cartoons is here reproduced (Plate 42), are not so overtly propagandist and frankly satiric as his later murals, the appeal of which is primarily that of the broadsheet or cheap woodcut of earlier days. For that reason they can be looked at more dispassion-

## DRAWINGS BY GERMANS AND AMERICANS

ately without our being forced to take sides too fiercely for or against the artist's ideas.

This is a courageous attempt to make poetry out of the processes of modern industry. Stanley Spencer's series of war panels, "Riveters", may be thought of as a more recent reversion to a sphere which constantly appeals to artists who feel the need to modernise their work by modernising their subject matter.

In this drawing the dominant visual theme lies in the gigantic superstructure and intertwined shapes of the machinery, overshadowing and dwarfing the regimented rows of workers who look themselves the creations of mass production, drones in an enormous hive. It becomes apparent that a high degree of plastic interest is not to be attained from so close a subservience to things as they are. In composition this drawing is spotty, fussy and over-ripe, like the Brangwyn Empire panels.

These murals must therefore be judged as failures; heroic failures perhaps, but clear evidence of the difference between journalism and art. However monumental industrial processes may be they do not readily translate into painting. An epic poem called the "Fordiad" would almost certainly be doomed to equal sterility.



## V. DRAWINGS BY SCULPTORS

Sculptors have lagged somewhat behind painters in their addiction to "modernism". Those who practise the craft have their flexibility cramped by its essential economics. Large scale works depend so much on public subscriptions, municipalities and business syndicates, or the capricious favour of governments whose taste is rarely commensurate with their financial power. Even so Brancusi, Gabo and Calder have in their researches pushed the abstraction of form in three dimensions to its limits, and Moore, Zadkine and Lipchitz have indulged in freedom of design sufficiently to show that this is no retardatory art.

None the less, sculptors exceed painters in their concentration on the human form. Like Pygmalion, most of them are still animated by the hope that their creations may inhale the breath of life and love them. Maillol once embraced a statue of a Grecian girl in the museum at Athens, and, though he is claimed by some critics as an abstract artist, he was infatuated with the form of living beauty.

Because of this deliberate and advised approach to the human body the drawings of contemporary sculptors fall into a group by themselves. It is a group to which might be attached some of those artists already covered in this survey—Modigliani, whose designs for his unachieved caryatids were the summit of his work, and Picasso whose modelled heads have every vital attribute of his pictures.

Again, the approach of a sculptor to drawing must necessarily be different from that of the painter since he has in mind a three-dimensional problem, while the painter's sketch is to be translated into another two-dimensional creation. At all times the sculptor is preoccupied with form, and particularly with the form of the human figure which so frequently provides the basis for his abstractions and creations. Like monocular vision, the drawing cannot see all round the subject and is therefore only of secondary interest to him.

Yet the sculptor, particularly the carver, feels the need for this shorthand of rapid draughtsmanship. In style he may favour the brilliant improvisation of Rodin, whose models were encouraged to walk about freely until they found naturally a balanced and graceful posture, which he would note down instantly. Or he may feel, as Moore does, that drawing from life cannot too closely precede carving from stone because the idea of cutting the living flesh is painful. As with Maillol his drawings may be the lexicon of his work, or like Lehmbruck and Moore the sculptor may create pictures which are

## DRAWINGS BY SCULPTORS

not studies for his statues and models, but stand in their own right expressing things he could say in no other way.

### MAILLOL

**M**aillol, the doyen of European sculpture, made his way to the art form in which he has found his fullest expression through painting, tapestry and the handicrafts. He has given expression to feelings of great depth and constant universality in the poses of that type of young Catalan girl who is his favourite model and the almost unvarying subject of his statuary. On that limited stop he plays the gamut of expression and he has impressed her image on the mind of twentieth-century man. Whether relaxed in the warm expectation of love or bowed in abandonment to grief, that figure portrays elemental human emotions; its monumental poise has the inevitability, the equilibrium from all angles, of great sculpture.

By choice Maillol is a carver, a stone cutter, not a modeller. There is no immediate relation in time or theme between his drawings from the human form and his sculpture. Particular sketches are not for specific works. They are aide-memoires, littered about his studio like the pages of a dictionary, for reference when need arises in the composing of the balanced masses of his figures. They are as it were a series of two-dimensional sections, views from many varying angles of a three- or even a four-dimensional whole. Where they are not complete Maillol supplements them by referring to photographs, other drawings, engravings, anything which can give enlightenment on the human form.

The "Seated Nude" (Plate 48) and "Nude seen from back" (Plate 43) are such drawings, two aspects of the short girl with plump haunches and wide shoulders who is Maillol's ideal of female beauty. No part of the surface is unmodulated: all is in soft tones gently caressing the modelling without any abrupt contours.

### DESPIAU

**I**t is natural to think, at the same time as Maillol, of the other major French sculptor of the century, Despiau, who also is a great draughtsman. Where Maillol generalises from nature, and seeks for the universal, the monumental, and the expressive, Despiau lingers more closely over the characteristics which distinguish one person from another, seeks to particularise. The mouth, the place where idiosyncrasy and character express themselves most fully, is an important point in his heads.

He has always been a hesitant worker, whose total sum of sculpture is small in relation to his working life. Equally he has never succumbed to the temptation which

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

befalls sculptors when faced with the intoxication of so much freer an activity, of multiplying his drawings so that they become unworthy, meaningless repetitions of an exhausted impulse.

His drawings are like his ideal of womanhood, elegant and graceful. He defines by contour, nervously following the form and characteristics of the model, in distinction from the smooth flow of Maillol's tone. The "Standing Nude" and "Recumbent Nude" illustrated at Plate 45 and Plate 50 show his draughtsmanship at its masterful summit.

## LEHMBRUCK

**T**he dichotomy between an artist's productions and his life is a fascinating though fundamentally fruitless study of speculation. It is fatally easy to argue back from melancholy in art to melancholy in the artist, and to deduce an untroubled mind from works of assurance and gaiety. In such essays we are as likely to be wrong as right. And yet the despairing cry "Vesti la Giubba", from the clown who is dying of grief, hackneyed and commonplace though the theme may be, is often enough true of New Grub Street and Bohemia.

To look at Lehmbruck's sculptures is to see the reflex of a fastidious and delicate mind. In their repetitions, monotonous almost, and in their languid grace they scarcely suggest a soul torn within itself. They bear of course the almost inevitable melancholy, the *Weltschmerz* common to his nation and his age. As we approach Lehmbruck's drawings we gain a closer hint of the self-doubts which led him to suicide; in his etchings, as in his meditations, the defeatism is made more explicit still. The theme of "Paola and Francesca", which was also the subject of one of Blake's most tragic illustrations to the *Inferno*, appealed to his essentially lonely soul. In his drawings he has expressed many ideas which he could not or did not express in his statues. Yet they have the same Gothic sweetness, an echo of Tilman Riemenschneider. But not all of them have a subject into which we should read anguish, or out of which we can derive solutions of universal problems. He drew often enough simply to please himself, studies for no sculpture, essays for no etchings. The two drawings reproduced at Plates 46 and 54 are of this genre. The study of a man—and drawings, or sculptures, from the male nude are strangely infrequent in these unclassical days—shows already how his mind is working out the elongations, the drawing-out of form which was the theme of the statue "Emporsteigende". It studies an exaggerated posture of the head in which neck and shoulder almost come into a straight line, a gesture under theatrical lighting revealing lassitude, reluctant, fatigued capitulation. Where it is hard and sharp in its contrasts that of the girl is light and gracious. The drawings illustrate the essential cleavage in the German soul, between its longing for classicism,

## DRAWINGS BY SCULPTORS

for the warm south, and its congenital bent towards the Gothic, the emotional and uncouth. Whilst the studies of the man are in decisive firm brush strokes, the contours of the girl are stroked in softly with the chalk.

### KOLBE

Kolbe belongs to the older generation of German sculptors. Unlike Barlach, Kokoschka, Kollwitz, he is the Northerner succumbing, as Goethe and Thomas Mann have done, to the fascination of the Mediterranean Lands. His drawings have been compared to Bernini's, and indeed they often have the same air of something fleeting quickly set down with rapid pen and wash, of an angel caught in midflight.

"Seated Woman" (Plate 53) exemplifies his characteristic heightening of the contrast of values in a nude figure, unusual in present-day drawing. A certain voluptuous lingering over the modelling gives it the appearance of a figure already executed in bronze, or a nude tanned by the sun. Its rotundity of form, its suppleness of shape may well be set against the analytical irregularity of Brzeska's "Nude" (Plate 47).

### LIPCHITZ

Few who at the beginning of the century were connoisseurs of the elaborate decorative style of the sixteenth century—the Fontainebleau school in France and the Jacobean style in England—can have expected a revival of strapwork. The wallpapers of the nineteenth century with their universal eclecticism had of course included this among all the styles they had caught up, but it was apparently far from the notice of serious artists. Yet it is a thankless task forecasting what may be raked out of the dustbins of the past. The present age has resurrected from oblivion Archimboldi and Boyvin. The means adopted in sculpture by Lipchitz, the young Pole, expatriate in Paris, was a modification of strapwork. His early work had the more rigid linearity of Renaissance decoration (most perfectly known in England in the formal garden). Just as this gave way to the serpentine exuberance of Baroque, and the rectangular panel to a flowing cartouche, Lipchitz' more recent style has graduated to a fluid plasticity.

As with Moore his drawing is an independent form of creation tapping ideas which do not or cannot find place in his sculpture. Grandeur invests the human figures he blocks out in massed black and white.

The modelling of the "Study for Prometheus" (Plate 59) has the light and shade which plays upon a cloud. The forward forms are picked out flatly in highlight, the outline is capriciously fronted by bites—an image suggested by the mordant rapacity of the torturer. The message of the drawing lies in its energy, the emphasis of the right

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

arm clutching the vulture which has fed upon the victim's liver, mercifully obscured by the shadows. It is a "Prometheus Unbound" and in its evocation of the spirit which endures

"To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;  
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates"

it is no unworthy trumpet to the battle which has ravaged Europe and the artist's homeland in these days when art even can scarcely take the measure of life.

## GAUDIER - BRZESKA

Gaudier-Brzeska's was a career parallel to Modigliani's. Each probably realised himself more thoroughly in his drawing than in his painting or sculpture. Each drew as though possessed by a demon, as though unable to stop. Each carelessly disposed of his sheaves of drawings, accounting himself fortunate if he got a pittance for them.

Gaudier-Brzeska's drawings fall by subject into two groups: nude studies and studies of animals. He would spend hours at the London Zoo watching the graceful movements of animals, striving to grasp the secret of the instinct which makes it impossible for them to take up an ungainly attitude. His treatment of these subjects was also twofold: either by a fluent calligraphic line caressing the profile or by a heavy charcoal trace with which he analysed the subject into volumes and sought out its solidity. The former method was one common to all ages of European art; but the latter means has an obvious relation to the cubist movement and its English offshoot, Vorticism, to which Brzeska paid verbal homage.

"Two Lionesses" (Plate 51) is representative of the former treatment, lithe like its subject in economy of detail and sinuousness. The physiognomy of the right-hand face is particularly noteworthy. Such a drawing encompasses the whole mystery of the craft. Just a few curving lines on paper, yet we apprehend the three-dimensional roundness, the supple, cruel forms of the beautiful beasts of prey. While this is all flowing line the "Nude" (Plate 47) is all form, carved in rock as it were out of the paper.

## DOBSON

Doobson is a carver, who assembles all the possible viewpoints of his figures into a continuous whole, satisfying in its equilibrium from all angles, and bound up, as are the successive moments of hearing a piece of music, into one act of apprehension.





## DRAWINGS BY SCULPTORS

His statues are far from committing the fault, laid at the door of the Laocoon, of arresting movement off its balance, so that we are disturbed by its suspended animation. He is one of the never ending line of artists who have sung their panegyric to the perennial beauty of woman's body. But he does not love the narrow-hipped Hay-dieted slim play-girl who was fashionable in the years between the wars. His ideal is round-limbed, broad-thighed, fit for motherhood. The drawings he has made, whether for specific sculptures or in their own right for the joy of drawing (such as Plate 49), fix down and arrest for ever those passing beauties, of limbs "noble and nude and antique".

## MOORE

Moore's earlier drawings for sculpture (of which Plate 44 is representative) were studies direct from the human form. His sculptured figures are always in an intense degree stationary and unmoving, and in these studies the sitters are almost turned into stones. Even then Moore took very little interest in the head on its correct scale—the expressive element of humanity. His nudes are bodies in every sense of the term. We feel them hurting the earth as they lie upon it.

Thereafter he came to feel that vision from one viewpoint only was too limited for the working out of sculptural problems in three dimensions. To correct this fault he devised a sort of cine-sketch, covering the pages of his notebook with the free formalisations of a subject seen all round and conceived from varying aspects. Plate 52 is a group of these ideas for sculpture, which are a counterpart to Rodin's sketches of the fleeting posture and Maillol's many reference leaves. These vivid wash drawings, "guessingly set down", perfectly fulfil their purpose of taking a plane section of a three dimensional reality.

The war has brought a new phase into the development of Moore's drawing, for he has become increasingly interested in the medium not merely as a preliminary for sculpture but in its own right. His scenes of life in London's shelters are a standard record of that aspect of the war in its remoteness and strange atmosphere. They are too well known to need reproduction in this place. Excited by the unforthcoming mystery of those figures, shrouded in their sleep, who preferred the public refuge to the constant fear of death above, Moore views in them, with complete detachment and an eye on the pictorial effectiveness of the long receding perspective of the tunnel, the sculpturesque possibilities of a multitude of recumbent forms. The figures remain as strange and as impersonal as when we pass them in the tube. They are a counterpart of the distinct, remote forms, with stunted heads and tree-like shapes who haunt his early sculptures.



## VI. DRAWINGS BY SURREALISTS

**T**he fantasy of man had been put in chains by the more extreme art theories of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the present century. It was a mark of encouragement to Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, and Cubists alike to be labelled "scientific". Optical theories of colour, metaphysical conceptions of form, jostled one another in the entrance lobbies of exhibitions. Groups vied with one another on which was most akin to Nature, to the reality behind appearances. Taken literally, their manifestos make art a subject for the laboratory only, and are a tribute to the false prestige of science at the time they were promulgated. Fortunately Cézanne and Seurat, no less than Delacroix and Pissarro, were artists first and laboratory hands second.

The cubist and abstract artists attempted to empty out the baby with the bath water, the literary content with the artist's personality. Then with the conclusion of this phase imagination and fantasy were allowed in again, blessed by science in the guise of Dr. Freud, and sometimes by politics through the shade of Karl Marx. Surrealism is to the second half of our epoch what cubism was to the first half.

The early apologists for surrealism sound as though they are describing seances in a fashionable psycho-analyst's consulting room. In reading the theories alone it is hard to see where art comes in. The manipulation of strange images to shock us can be reduced to a mechanical device. Nor has the plastic language they used always been satisfactory. Yet, after the long innings of the abstract schools, this emphasis on the symbolic and esoteric was a relief. Artists like Picasso and Paul Nash felt, without rigid adherence to the school, a revivifying influence from it.

The value of such a movement is not least in the light it throws on the accepted masterpieces, on what has gone before. When the theories of Romantic criticism were formulated in the nineteenth century it was discovered that Shakespeare was a Romantic. The schools of cubist and abstract art drew attention to the importance of abstract design in Raphael and Vermeer. In their turn the surrealists have emphasised the presence of the irrational and unexplained in—for instance—the illustration at Plate 39.

Their movement has now passed its prime, but it has left a permanent effect for good in its insistence on the emotional elements in art. It is often necessary to cast out one heresy by another, and art can stand too much inconsequence far better than too

little. As they go their individual ways the artists who were gathered together in this group show that the imagination as well as the fancy could take nourishment from the super-realist discipline.

## CHIRICO

Chirico was claimed by the surrealists as a forerunner, an innovator who unconsciously anticipated their intentions and theories. The phase during which he freely plumbed the depths of his fantasy lasted from his twenty-fourth to his thirtieth year; at that time he sought to express the uneasiness and uncertainty of places, all they hold in them of melancholy and mystery. Incapable of repeating these discoveries after the mood which went to their creation had passed, Chirico has gone on to other less exciting fields, but his work during those eight years is well established among the classic interpretations of the twentieth century. The drawings of the period are even rarer than the paintings, but they are composed of the same uneasy fabric of a dream.

His juxtapositions, of a statue, an impossible perspective, a steam engine, have on us the same effect as the haunted fever-ridden squares described by Thomas Mann in "Death in Venice" or the streets of the town through which Kafka's hero is hounded to execution in "The Trial". That uneasiness felt by the sensitive in the unending street vistas of Megapolis or the derelict towns of the Continent is revealed and concentrated in these unnerving pictures. The place is unknown to us yet we feel we have been there before. It is described with the clarity of vision, the pathological exactness of detail, which are characteristic of paranoia. More than any other landscapes or portraits of façades they convey the soul of a modern city and enfold us

*"Dans les plis sinueux des vieilles capitales,  
Où tout, même l'horreur, tourne aux enchantements."*

The assemblage of objects with some kind of logical coherence, such as the set squares, gnomon, legs and boxes which go to form the bodies of "The Mathematicians" (Plate 56), is not of course a new device. It is common to the trophies sculptured on the plinths of columns to commemorate Roman victories, to the fantastic ornaments of Bracelli and to the rebus of the children's puzzle column of a Victorian periodical. What is new is the placing of such figures in a normal setting, to heighten their tension and suspense. Successors to the evening-illuminated statues of his earlier paintings, these two forms in earnest converse against the Vasari-like architecture of a small Italian town are the flare-up into life of a lineage born in such analyses as Picasso's "Figure" (Plate 10) and dying out in Léger's "The Compass" (Plate 7). By its conversion of humanity into a pile of junk against a background of tradition this drawing comments fitly enough on the age of the mathematical physicists, with their destructive discovery of "God the Mathematician".

## MAX ERNST

Not the least service the surrealists have rendered to modern art has been their technical ingenuity, the practical imagination with which they have found new methods and subject matter in unexpected places. Ernst, the most resourceful of them all, has in fact enlarged the age-old and limited boundaries of drawing technique by his discovery of *frottage*. He has described how in a seaside inn on the 10th August 1925 he first felt impelled to take blacklead rubbings of the grain in a hard-scrubbed wood floor, and how in the paper were revealed, as in the cracks of da Vinci's wall, the expressions of subconscious states. He rubbed other materials—leaves, sackcloths, painting with heavy impasto, and drew out of them the visions they suggested. Thus the juvenile hobbies of brass rubbing and pressing leaves between the pages of books have been taken over for the purposes of art.

The first *frottages* were published in a portfolio called "Histoire Naturelle", from which the two plates are taken. The title and the illustrations are a vindication of Oscar Wilde's paradox that Nature imitates Art. In the "Decay of Lying" Wilde has made a case against realism which the surrealists could echo:

"Art finds her own perfection within, and not outside of, herself. She is not to be judged by any external standard of resemblance. She is a veil rather than a mirror. She has flowers that no forests know of, birds that no woodland possesses."

Such are the plants and beasts in Ernst's "Natural History". "Elle garde son secret" (Plate 61) is an epitome of the coyness coupled with seduction of all flowers, which appear to conceal their sex and yet give such an urgent and impudent appeal. "L'Évadé" (Plate 62) with its absurd beak, its eagle eye hovering high above the plain, is a grotesque friendly version of one of Odilon Redon's balloon-eyed nightmares. Apart from their liveliness, their immediate appeal to our sympathy, these drawings have, thanks to the method of their production, a unique loveliness of texture.

## MASSON

Masson shows even in the flowing line of his paintings that he is essentially a calligrapher. This was evident in the whip-like strokes across the décor for Massine's ballet "Les Présages". His early drawings have the same appeal as those children's puzzles in which bottles, cats and faces are hidden among the foliage of a tree, awaiting discovery. Out of them hidden forms emerge, a dismembered hand, part of a fish, in the way symbols appear along the line of a dream, half grasped at only to go underground, to submerge again. Like a dream the meaning of the drawing may, however, not reveal itself to conscious search.

## DRAWINGS BY SURREALISTS

In his more recent drawings this method takes a new, maturer and more refined turn. Since there is nothing new under the sun he has gone for instruction to the writing masters and the masters of engraved ornament, who built up human forms out of acanthus leaves. He takes a new delight in the responsiveness of the pen to pressure, in the contrast of hair strokes and deeply gouged lines. "Nude under a Fig Tree" (Plate 63) is all equilibrium in pattern. The components which form its title are summarily represented by snatches of their characteristic, gay outlines. The tree is alive with eye-like forms; but they bear the ambiguity emphasised in Lawrence's poem "Figs"—

"Folded upon itself and secret unutterable  
Fig, fruit of the female mystery, covert and inward."

"Centauresse" (Plate 57) is more closely akin to the style of the seventeenth-century penmasters. The play principle behind all art finds joyful expression in the brilliant arabesques, the penstrokes whose thickness is so admirably controlled and which weave a ballet of movement, of opulent ornamentation round her form. There is an eloquence of movement, of life, in this bizarre form. The strange shy creature is caught metamorphising into Nature.

## DALI

In the autobiography of his "Secret Life" Salvador Dali has sought to hide from the world nothing of himself, even his intra-uterine memories, and this is only the continuation of a process begun by his paintings. Their *trompe l'oeil* finish has the morbidity proper to the manifold fetishes he reveals in them without disguise—high-heeled shoes, crutches, flesh and bone sticking like protoplasmic arms from inanimate objects, rubber watches, fish-net stockings with holes in them. The value of so complete a self-revelation must largely turn on the extent to which the onlooker is vexed by the same evil spirits.

The drawing "Cavalier of Death" (Plate 58) is a spirited modern rendering of a theme familiar enough in the iconography of art, and is not dependent on these personal factors for its evaluation. Technically, it borrows yet another process from the schoolboy and the past—the "blottesque" method recommended by Alexander Cozens as an aid to amateur water-colourists and the medium of much of his own best work. The blots are linked together by the swirling colonies of hairlines characteristic of Dali's penmanship, to compose the macabre figure so familiar in early German woodcuts, the "Fourth Horseman of the Apocalypse".

"And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death,

## TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAWINGS

and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth.”

Now, when the dominion of Death is extended even beyond its Biblical limits it is no surprise to find that the Revelation, which has been for so long an origin of apocalyptic proletarian imagery, is still a fitting source book whose symbols may be more significant than the private monomanias of surrealists.

## DELVAUX

The Belgian Delvaux takes us without technical tricks into a more precisely organised space, as though we were back in the days of the cassone front and the Quattrocento. He is a master of the magic of the unexplained gesture, of dreamlike, hallucinatory situations in which we see everything clearly, recognise that it has a meaning, and yet the meaning escapes us. His is the lyricism of the unanswered question. To analyse such a drawing as Plate 60 is to cast a violet into a crucible; yet a mere catalogue of its constituents is a form of poetry. The woman with large dark eyes against the wall of a picture gallery exercises a hypnotic influence over the artist. She or her sister is present in all his visions. The long perspective of ancient ruins, the troupe of women, the skeleton, the two other women making graceful, statuesque gestures: all these things have no subject to which a title could be given but cohere together under the spell of the artist's imagination.

## PAUL KLEE

The drawings of Paul Klee represent a new, perhaps final, phase in the disintegration of traditional forms of art. He is the *enfant terrible* of modern drawing. The revolution he has effected is unique and personal, and is not really to be grouped with that of the surrealists, the abstract painters or the cubists. From the beginning much of the wit and charm of his pictorial parables has lain in their titles. By a curious but not unexpected throw-back to these origins the “Incredulous Smile” (Plate 64) challenges comparison with the “Mona Lisa”. The tortuous outline, seemingly so aimless, but under such complete intellectual control, the mosaic filling, spell out a contemporary feminine enigma equivalent to the Sphinx and to Leonardo's conundrum. Her maddening grin is the modern transmogrification of that smile, hypnotic across the centuries, which induced Pater to say: “Hers is the head upon which all ‘the ends of the world are come’ and the eyelids are a little weary. . . . All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have

## DRAWINGS BY SURREALISTS

of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias."

How tedious is the direct contemporary descendant of the *Femme Fatale* was seen, for example, in the egregious heroine of the "Green Hat"—best selling novel of the twenties. The Pre-Raphaelite fatal woman hardly escapes that reproach—she is so obviously ill: she will not go away and cannot play. Klee's mocking vision banishes those sickening languors, those cloying fantasies. This awful child with a garish hat has eyes for everything. It is impossible to tell whether her smile resides in a tightly drawn rosebud mouth or in a broad circular grin. As we look it eludes us; as we look away it follows us. Above all, and because she is an awful child, the smile is not enigmatic but incredulous.

It is misleading to equate Klee's drawing with child art. A child's drawing, if really unsophisticated, is immediately satisfying but does not wear well. It does not and cannot give the lasting pleasure that must in part rely on the recognition that a controlling mind with experience and wisdom is behind the work.

Klee's mind, as revealed in his later drawings, is certainly childlike, and often demonic. But his technique, though based on or springing from the same sources as the child's, is fully capable of bearing out his intentions. Such a drawing as "Playing Children in a Chain" (Plate 55) is immediately and lastingly charming. It renders the joyful pleasure of children at play, and at the same time recognises that they are urchins, that those who play in the streets are old people, primeval in their experience and their knowledge.

His city in a mountain landscape (Colour Plate C) brings us to the end of this survey of contemporary draughtsmanship. It is a fitting enough conclusion. In its renunciation of perspective and photographic illusionism this disingenuous water-colour stands for the full denial of the scientific systems which have pervaded Western art since the Renaissance. When increasing familiarity with Chinese, Japanese, primitive and other art histories showed that the results at which painting and drawing aim could be achieved without a formidable logical buttress that denial was, sooner or later, inevitable. There is unlikely to be any rewarding future in the old ways. Whether there is any in the new remains to be seen. But then the future would lose its fascination for us if it were not always a riddle.

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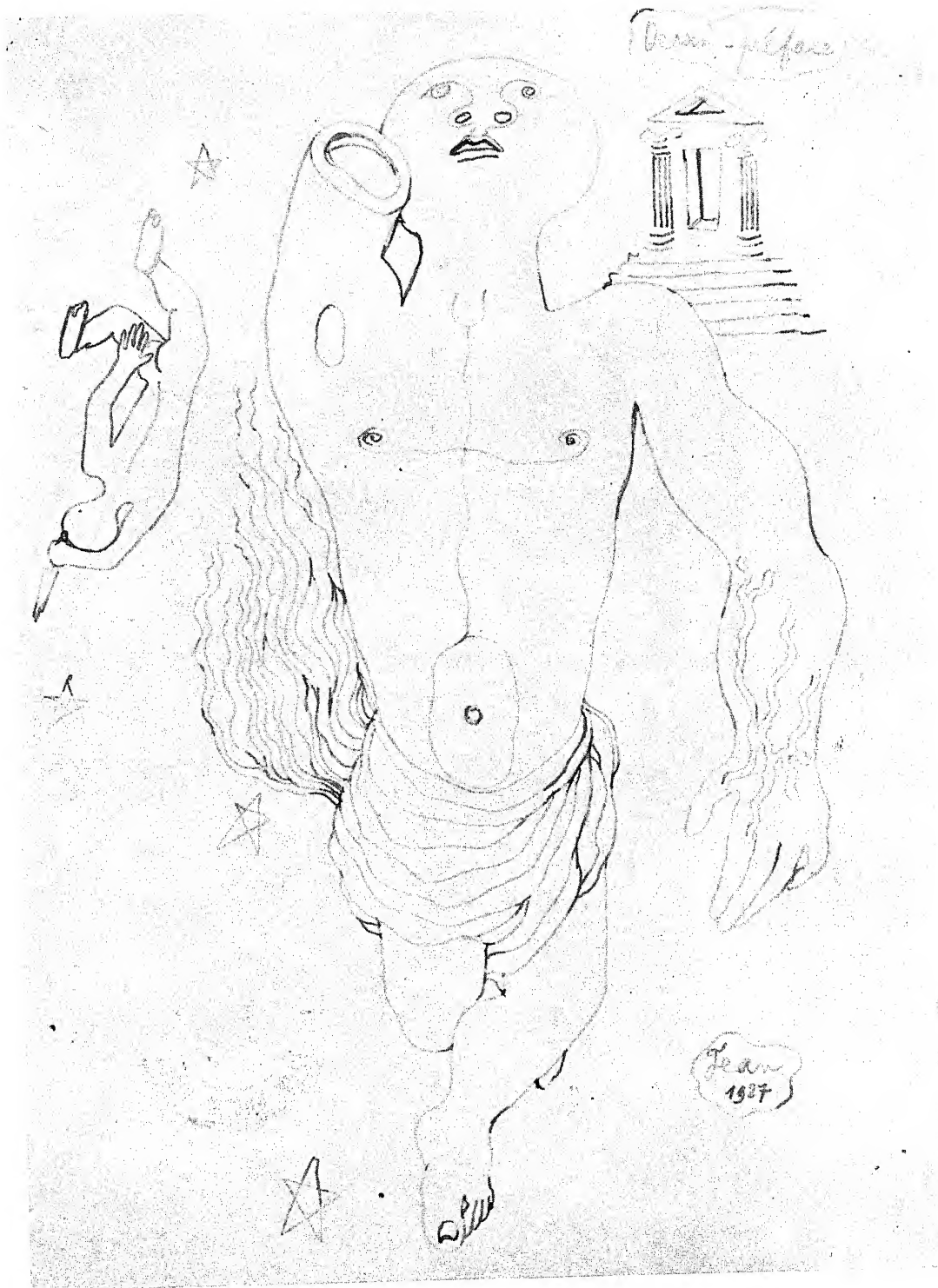




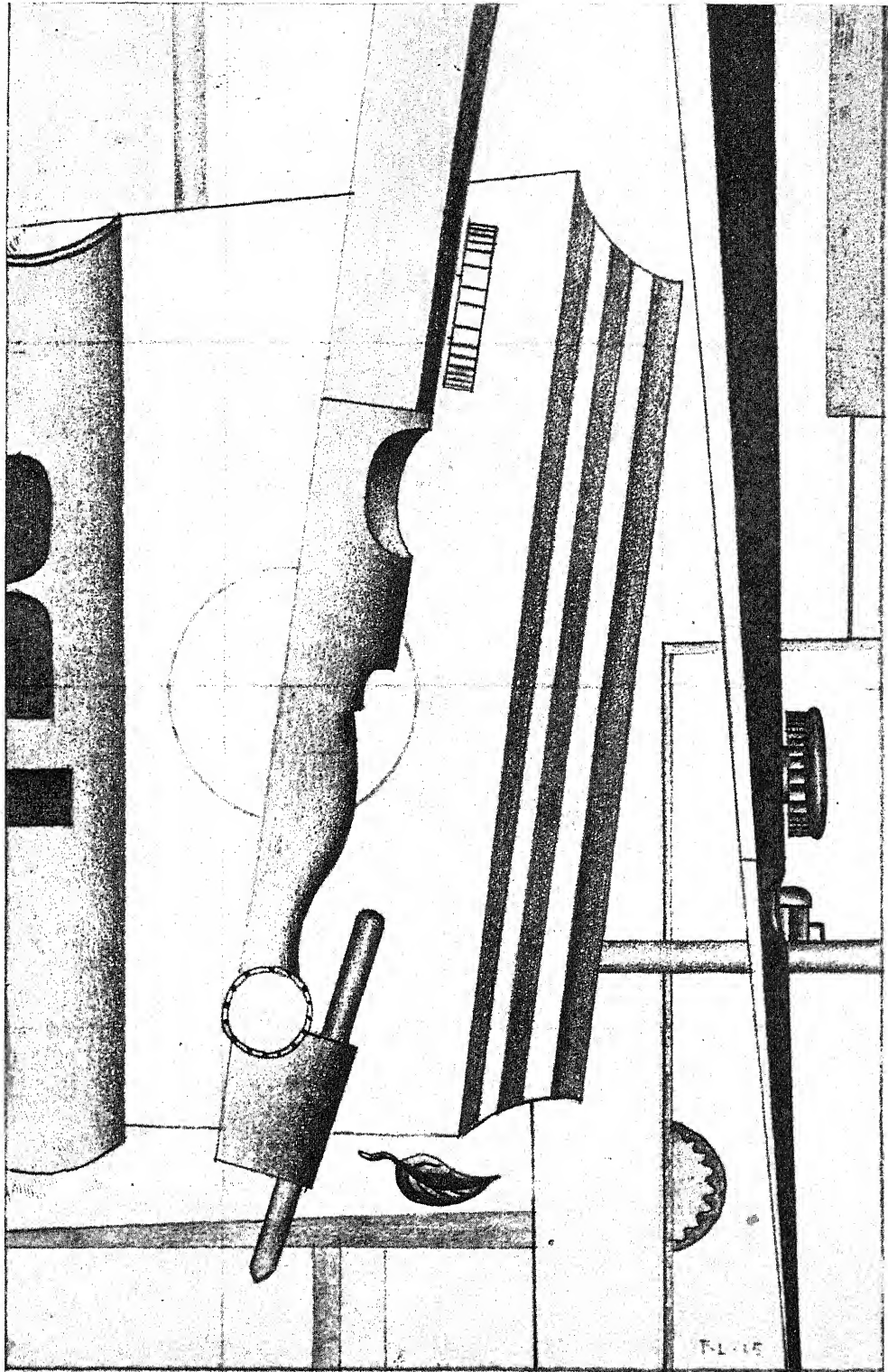


PICASSO: *Head*

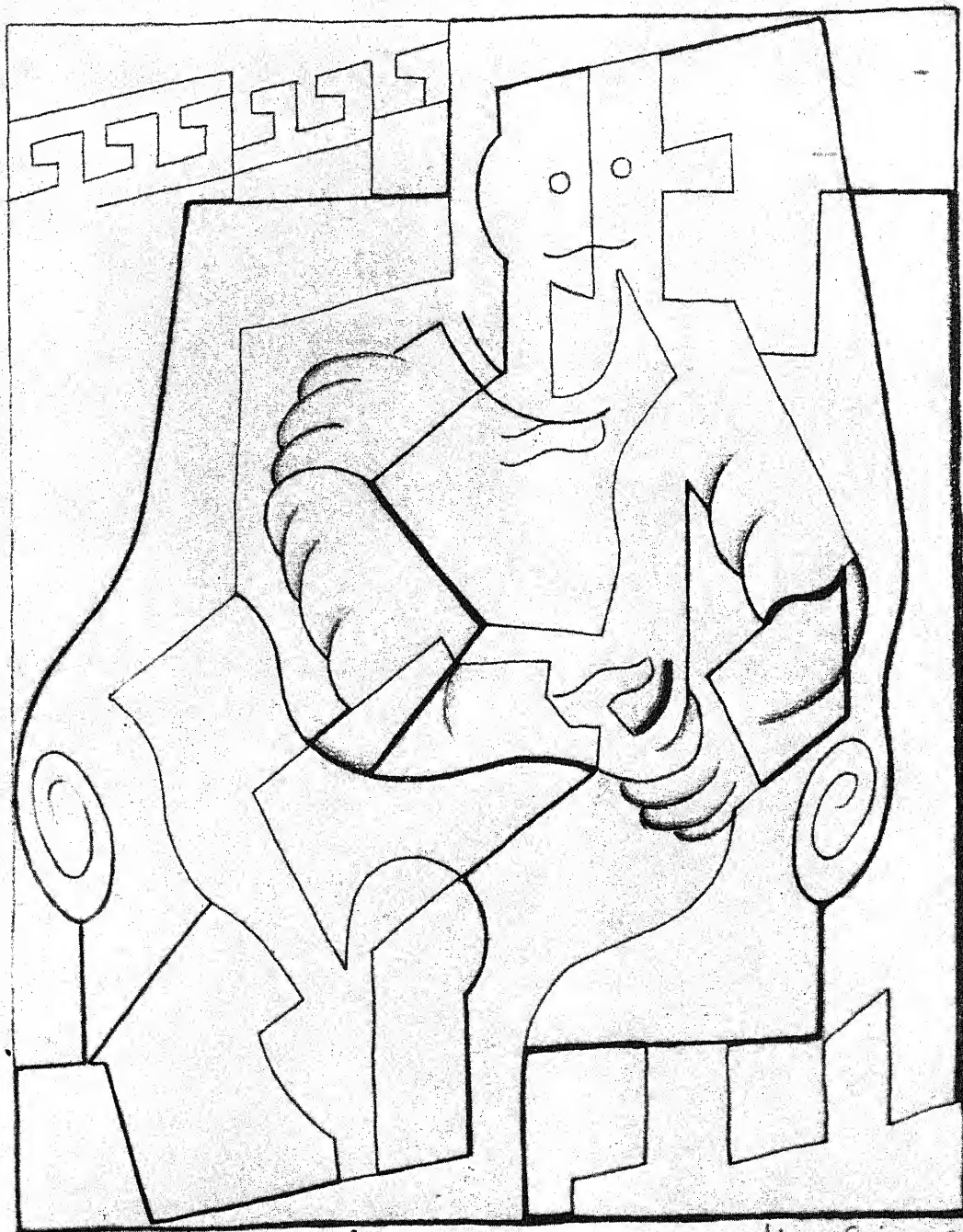




COCTEAU: *Design for frontispiece*

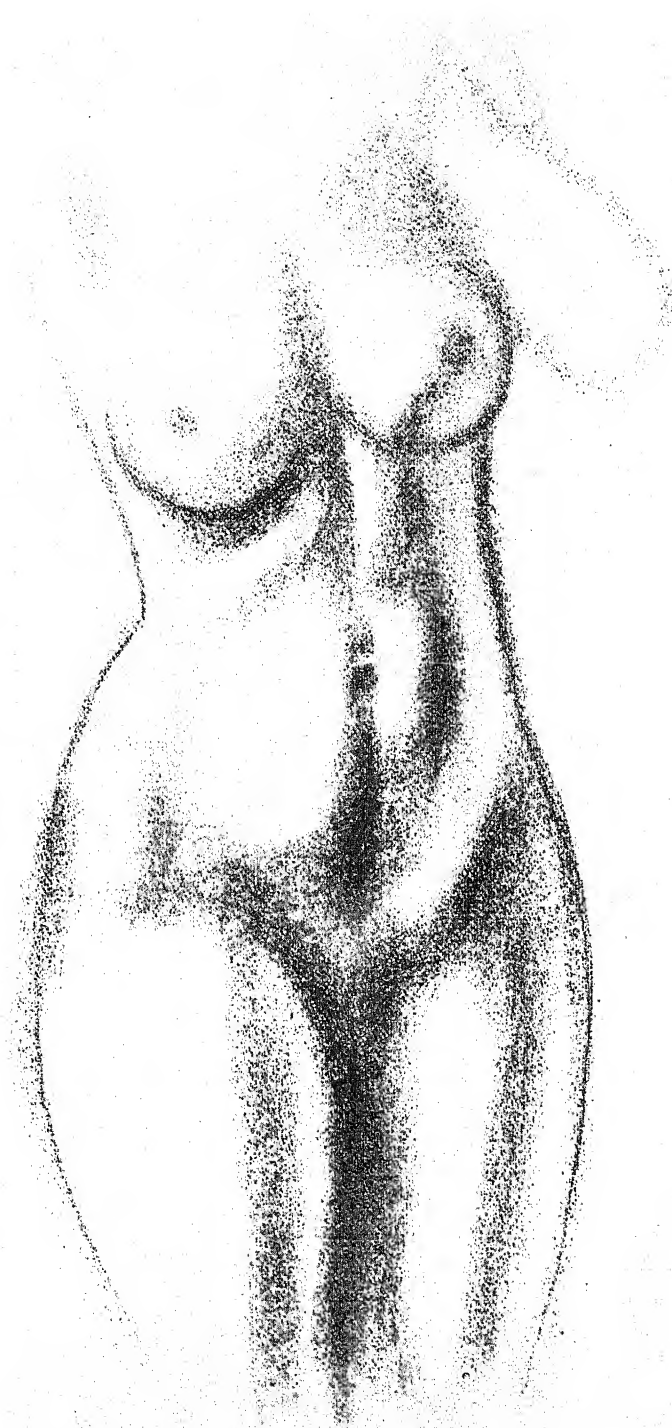


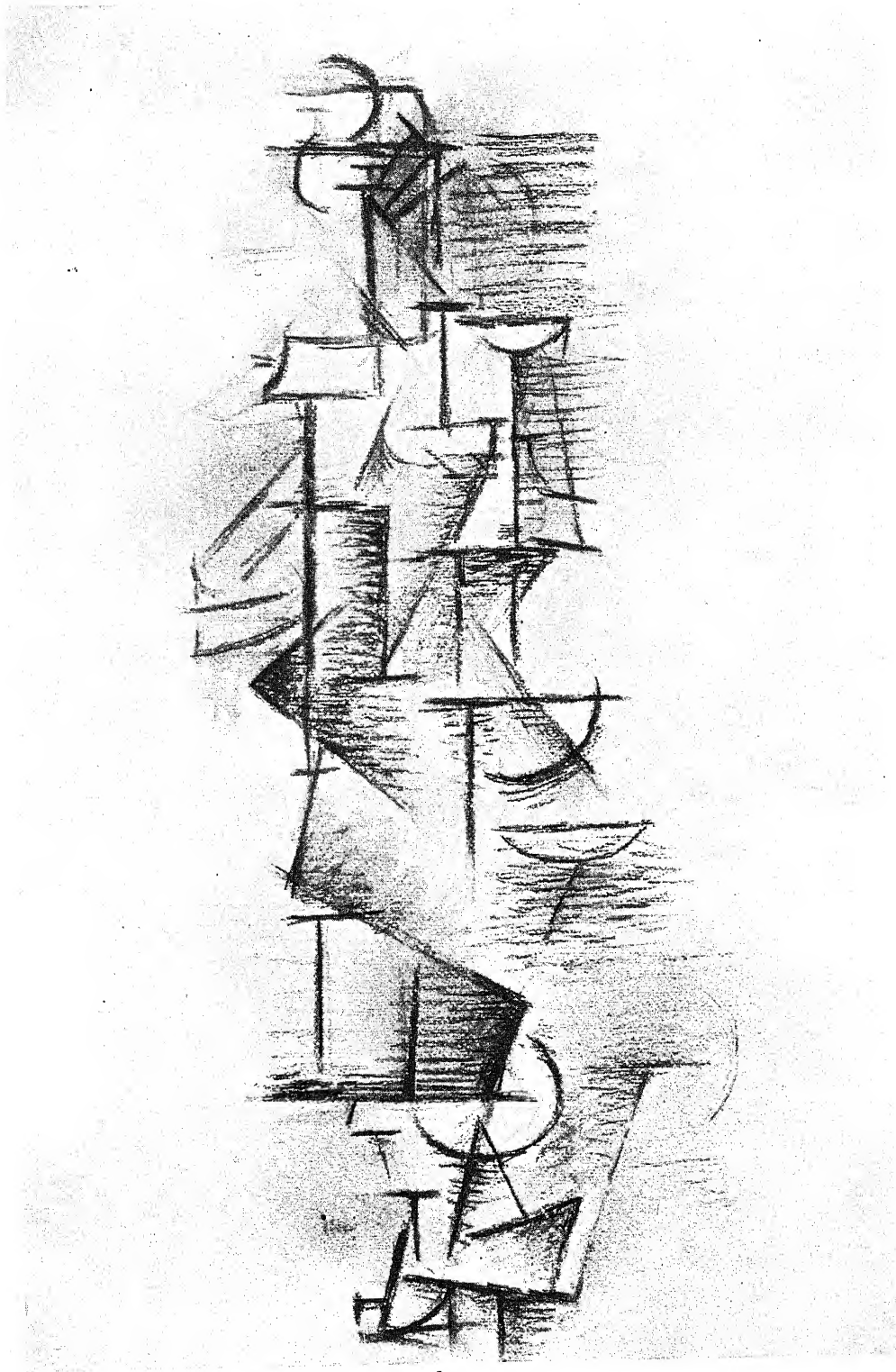




Juan Gris 1-20

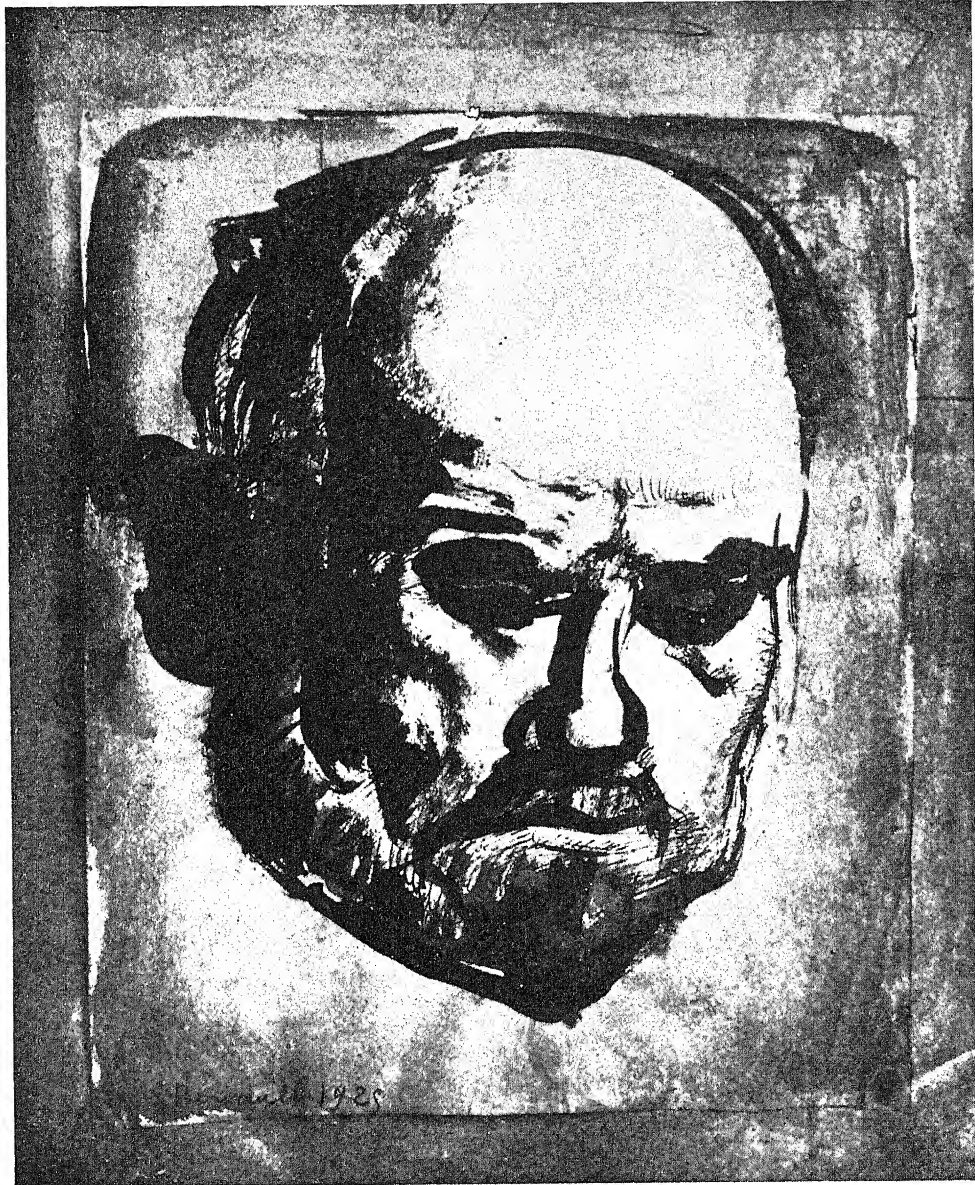
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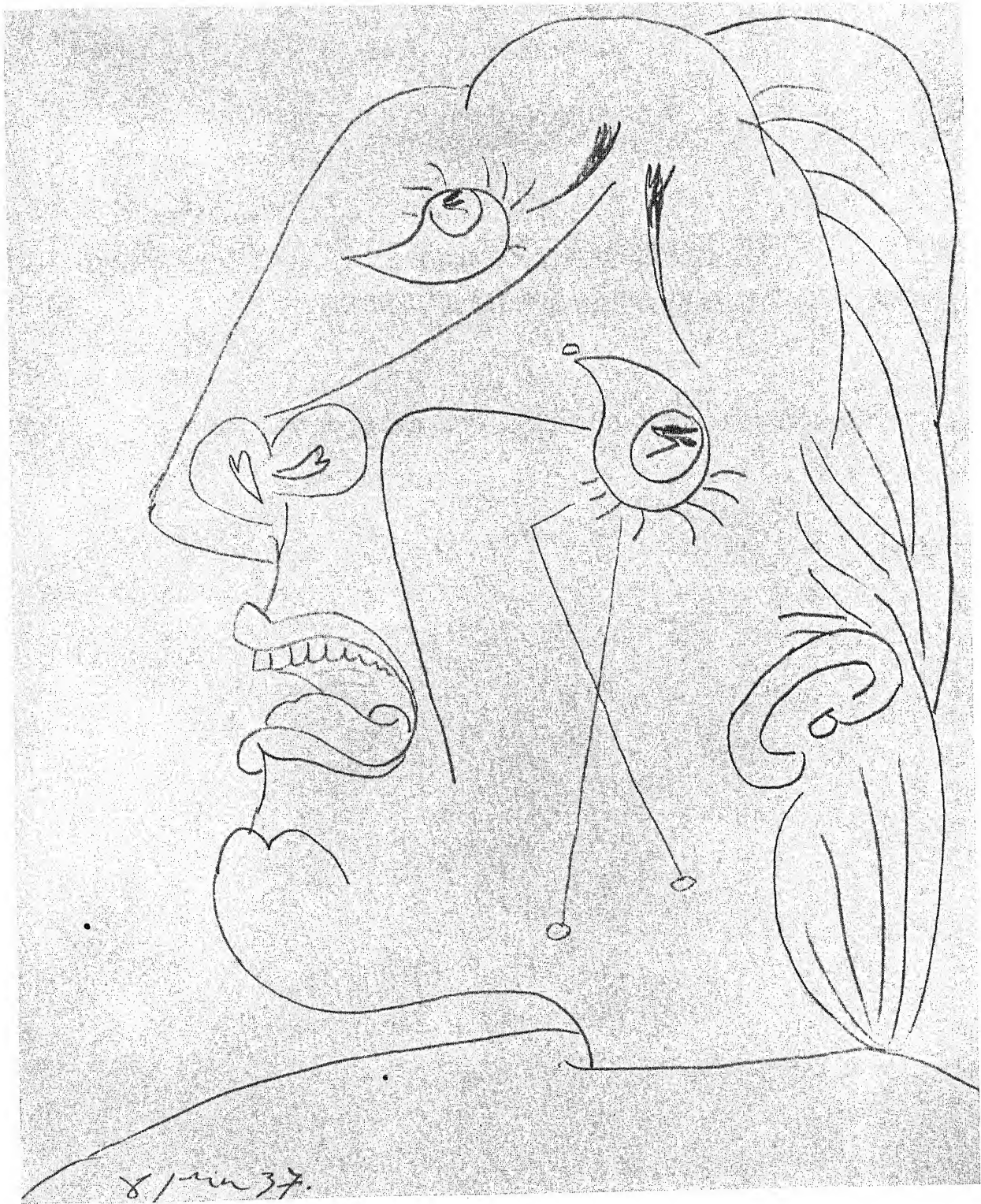




PICASSO: *Figure 1910*







PICASSO: *Crying Woman*

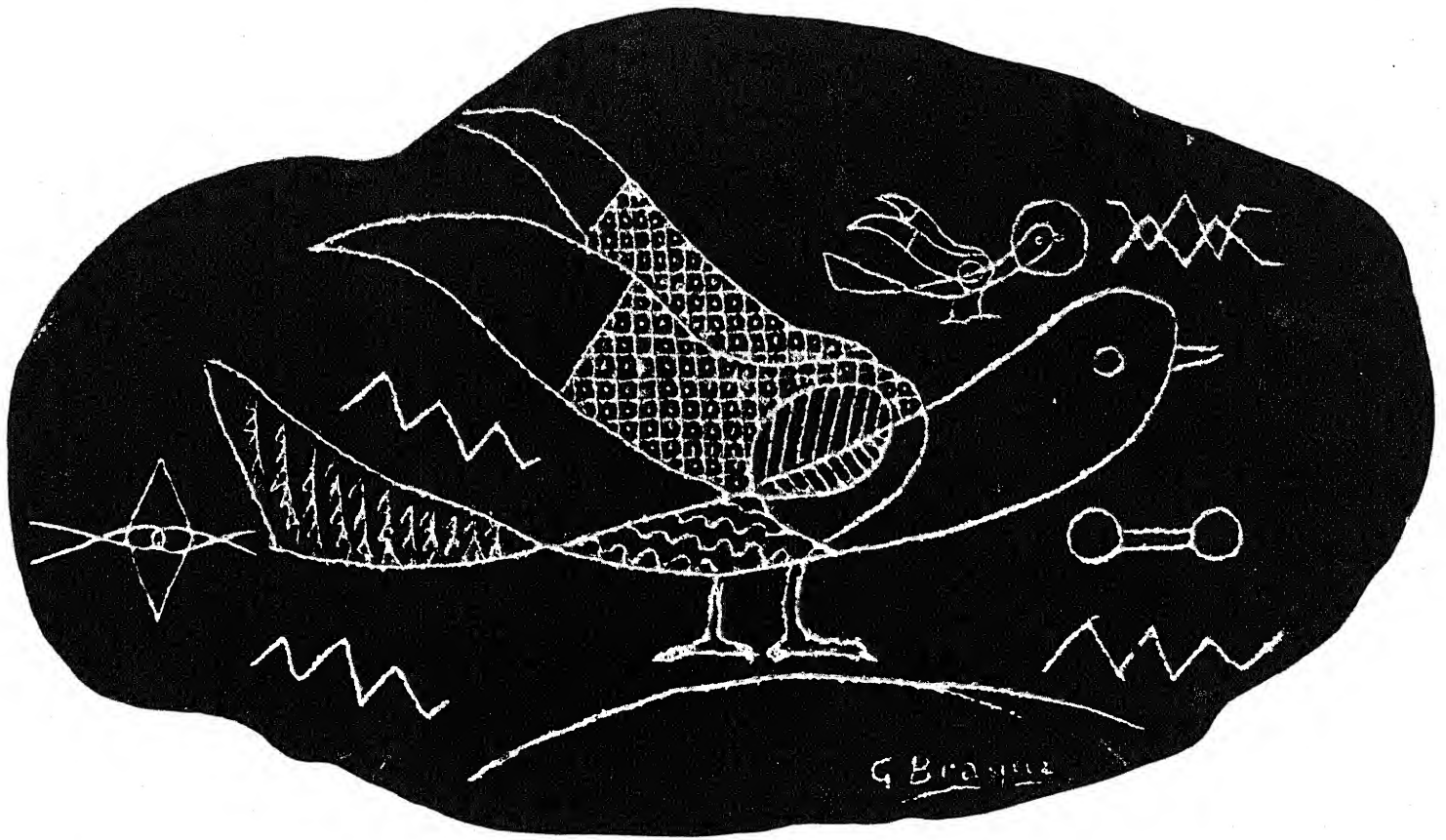


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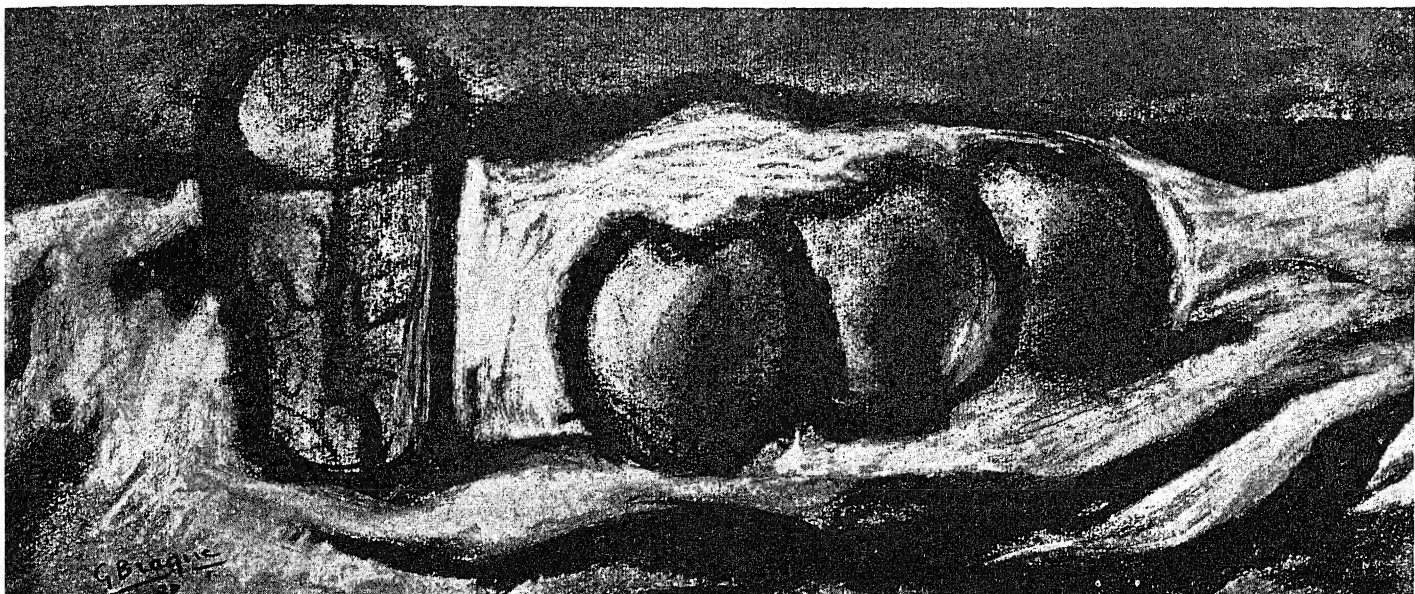
MODIGLIANI: *Woman in Hat*



MODIGLIANI: *Seated Nude*





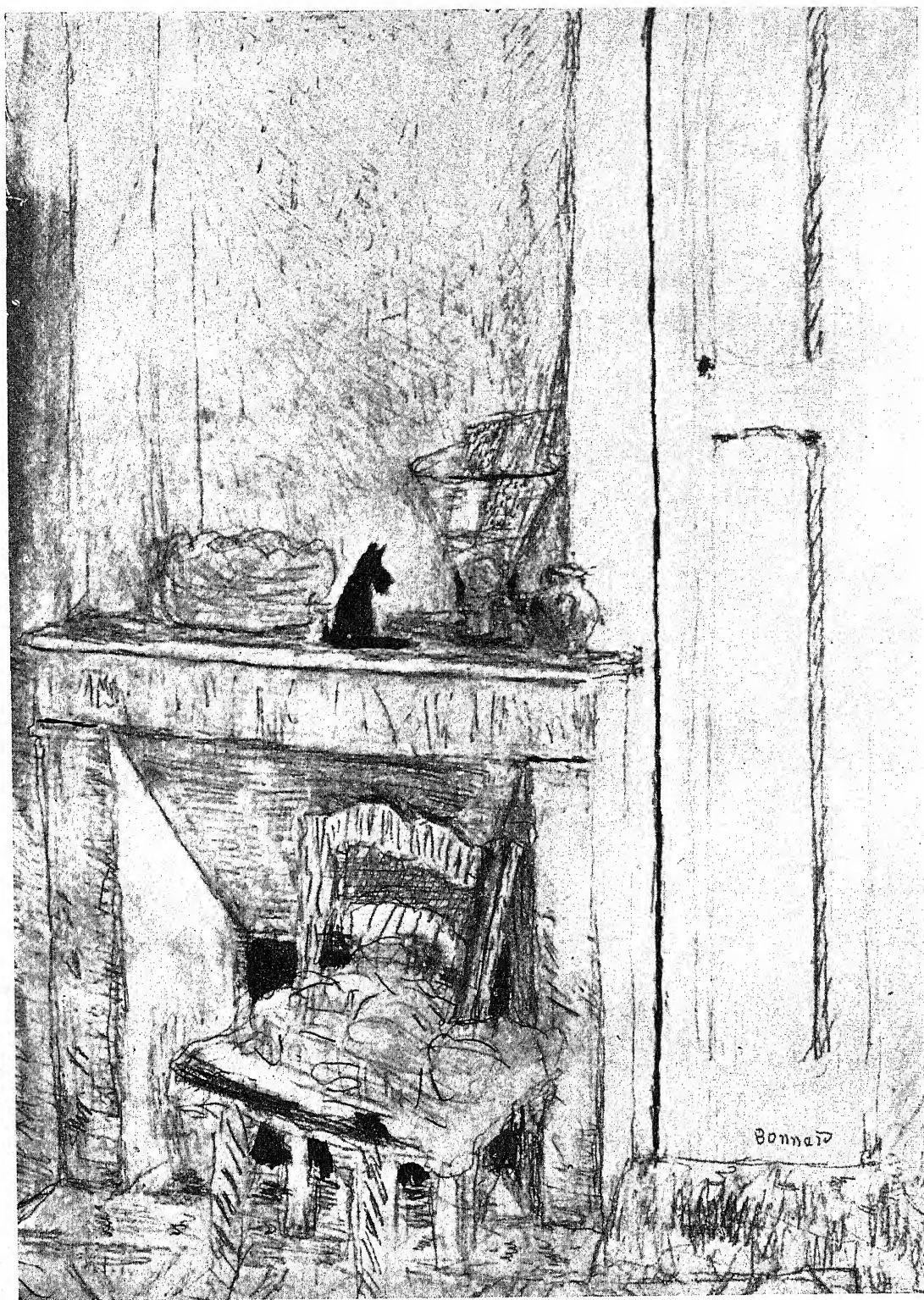






MATISSE: *Lady with Head-dress*







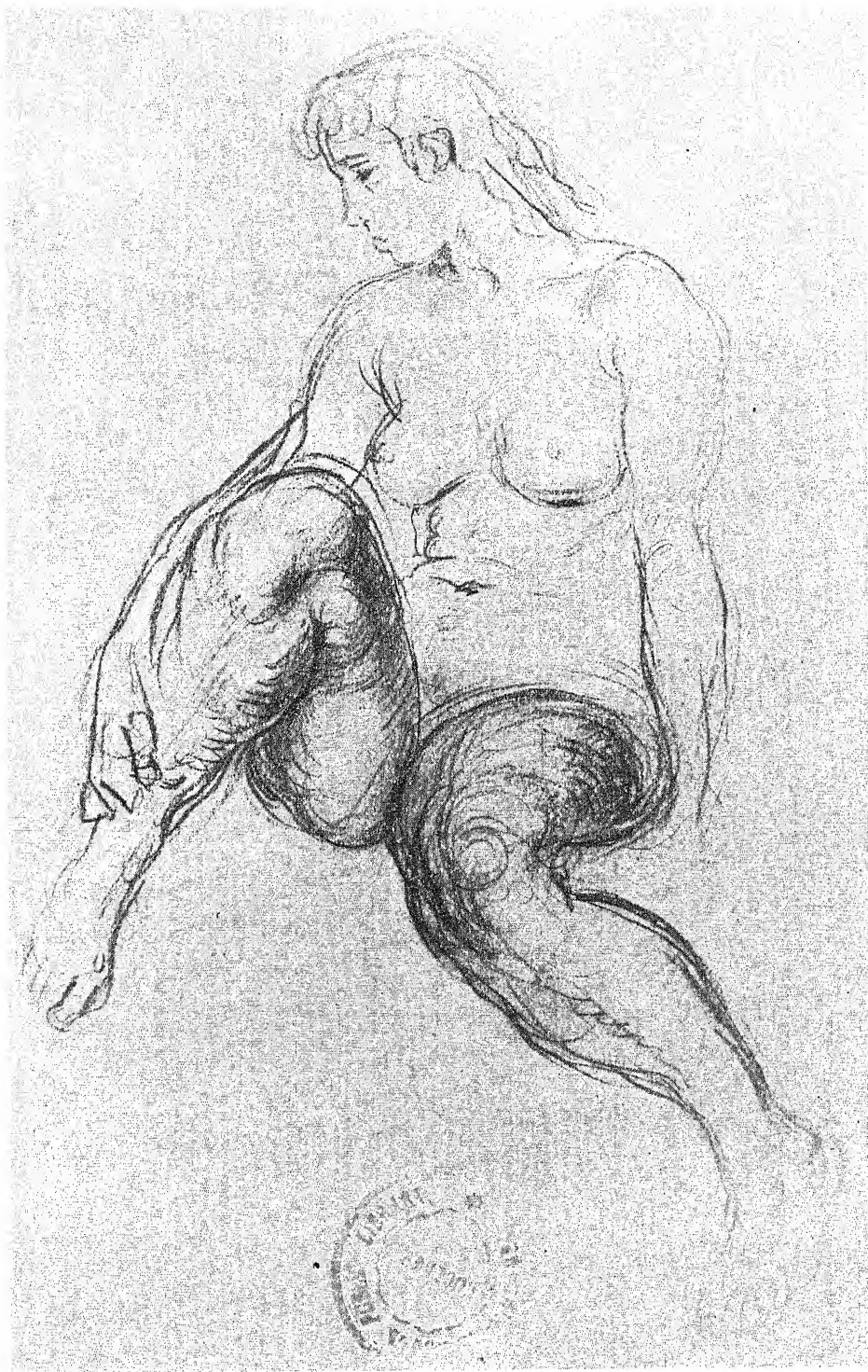
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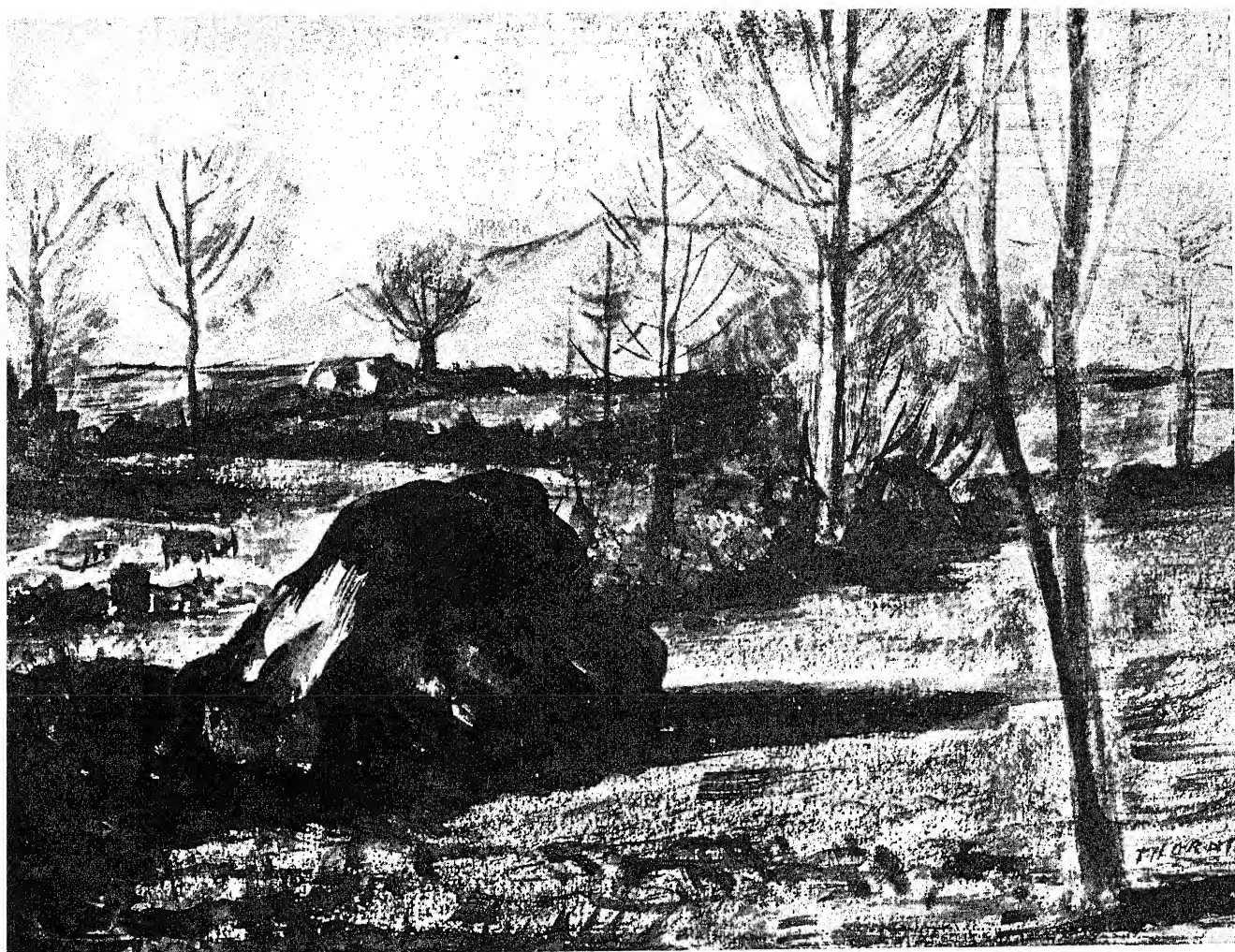


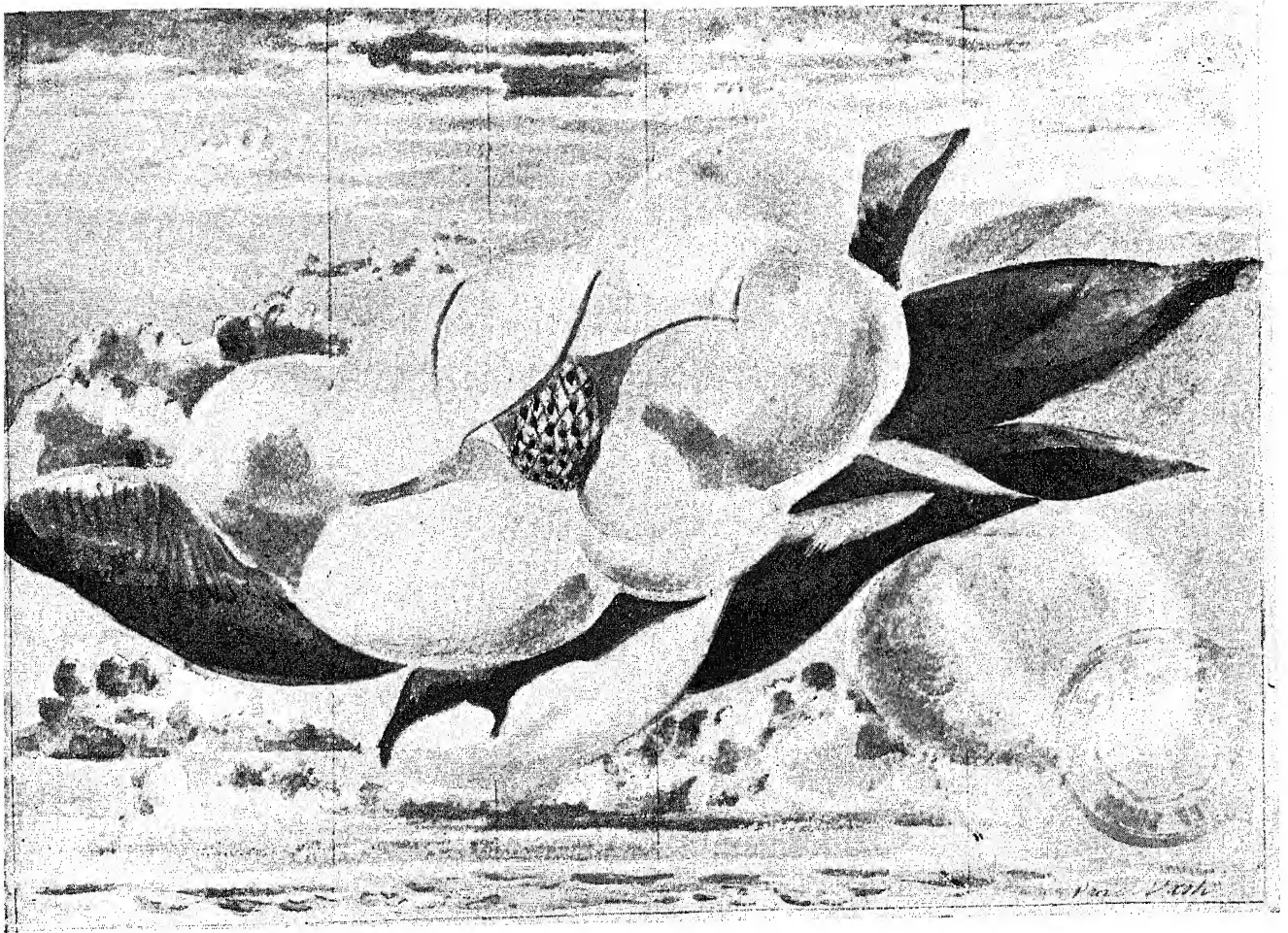






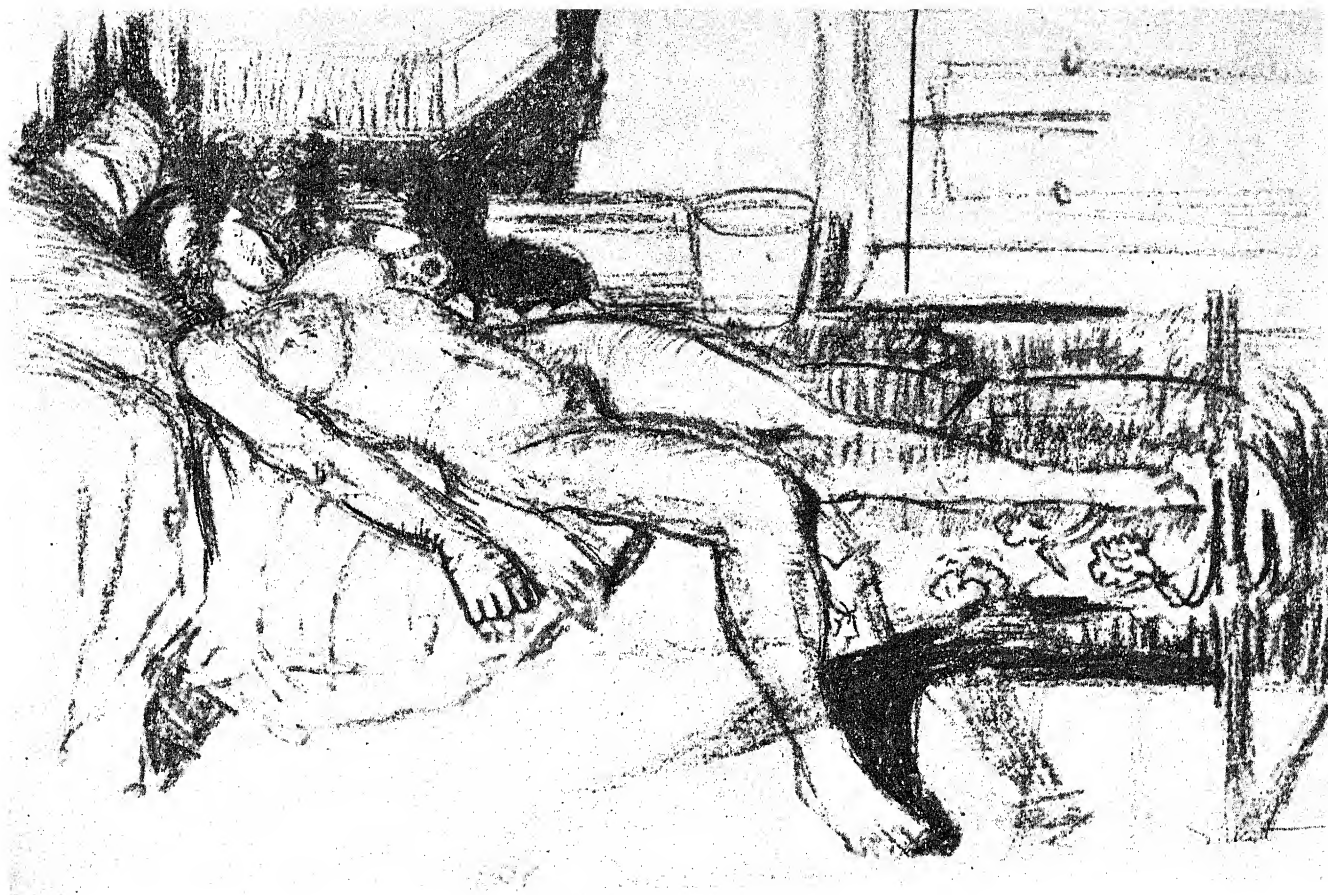
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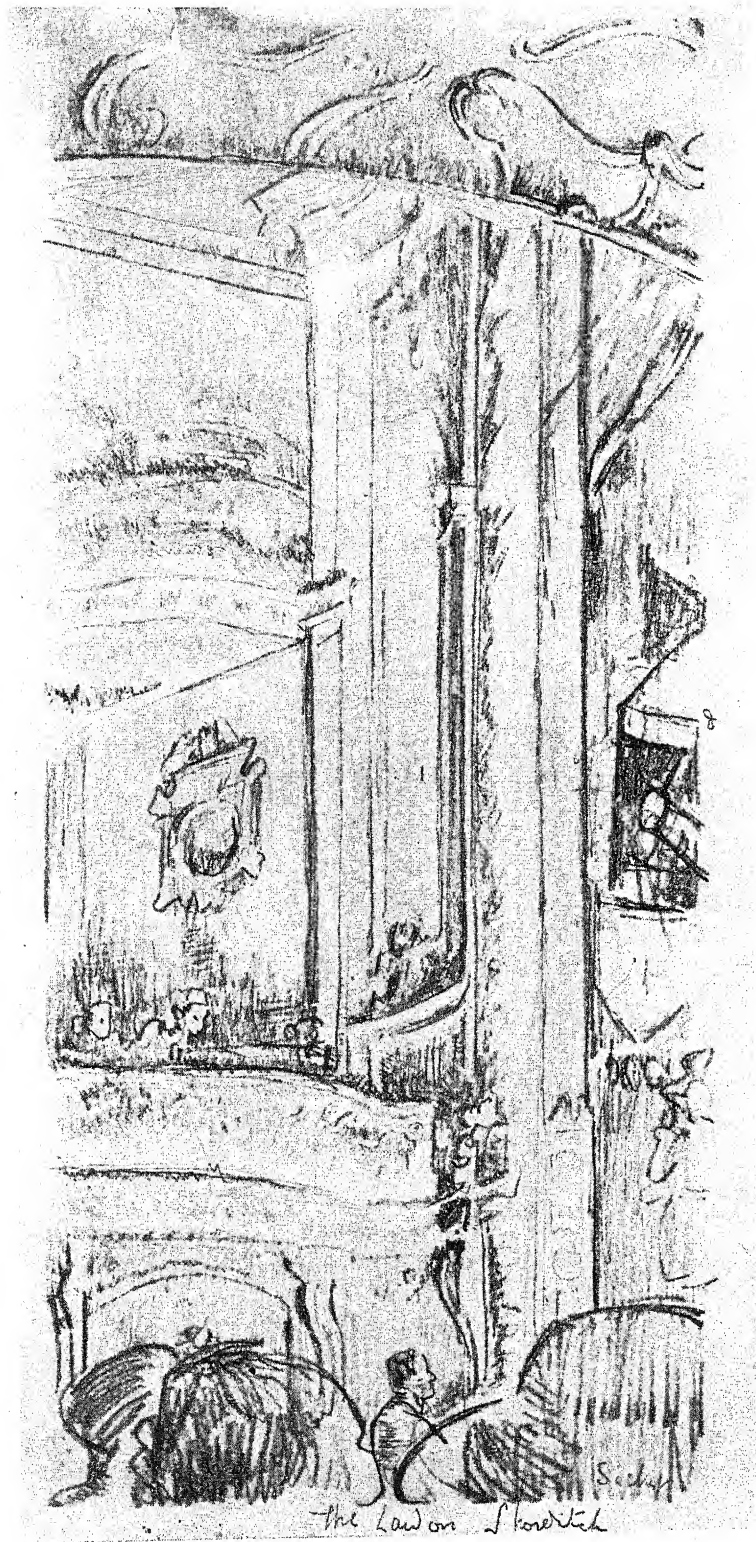




PAUL NASH: *Flight of the Magnolia*



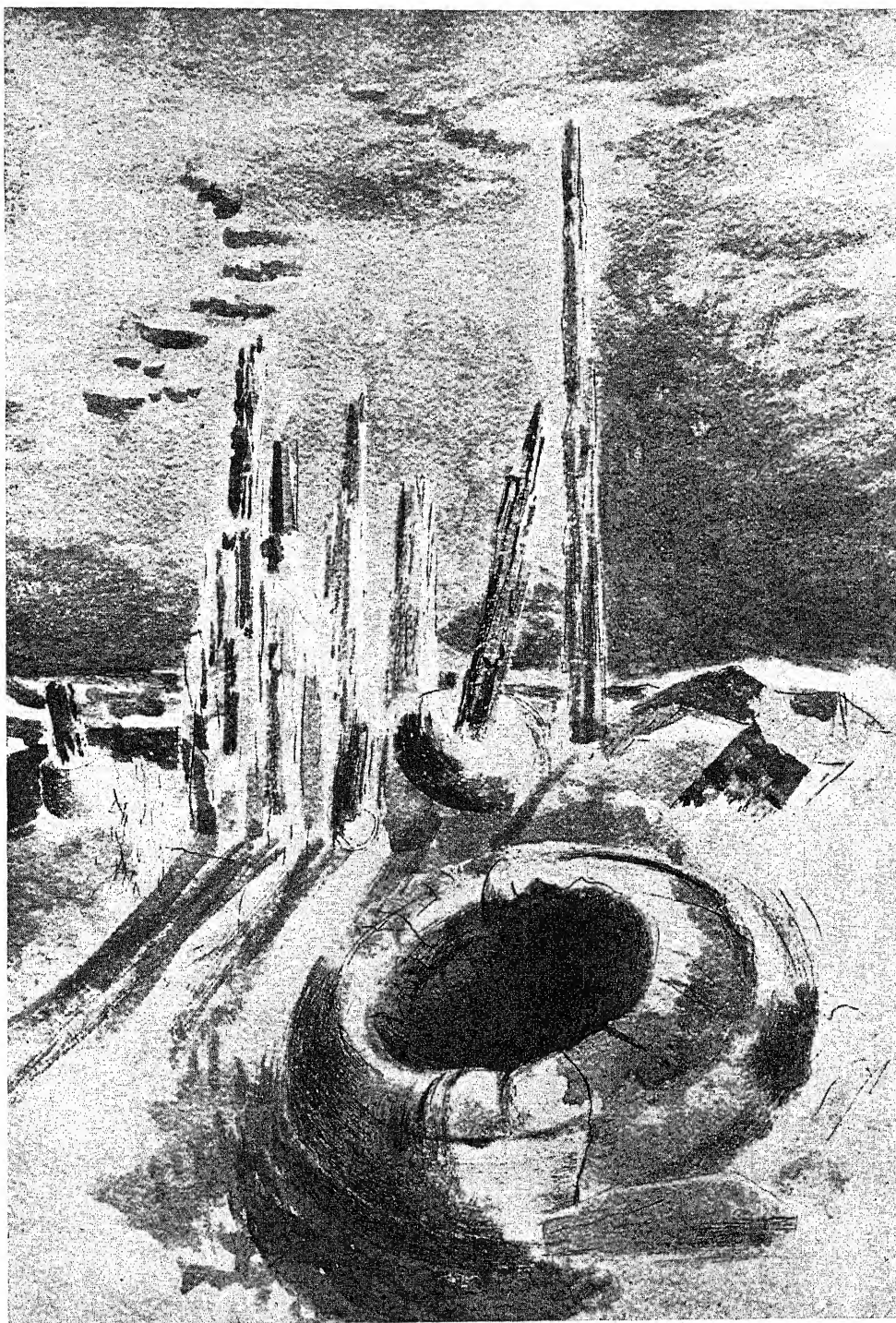




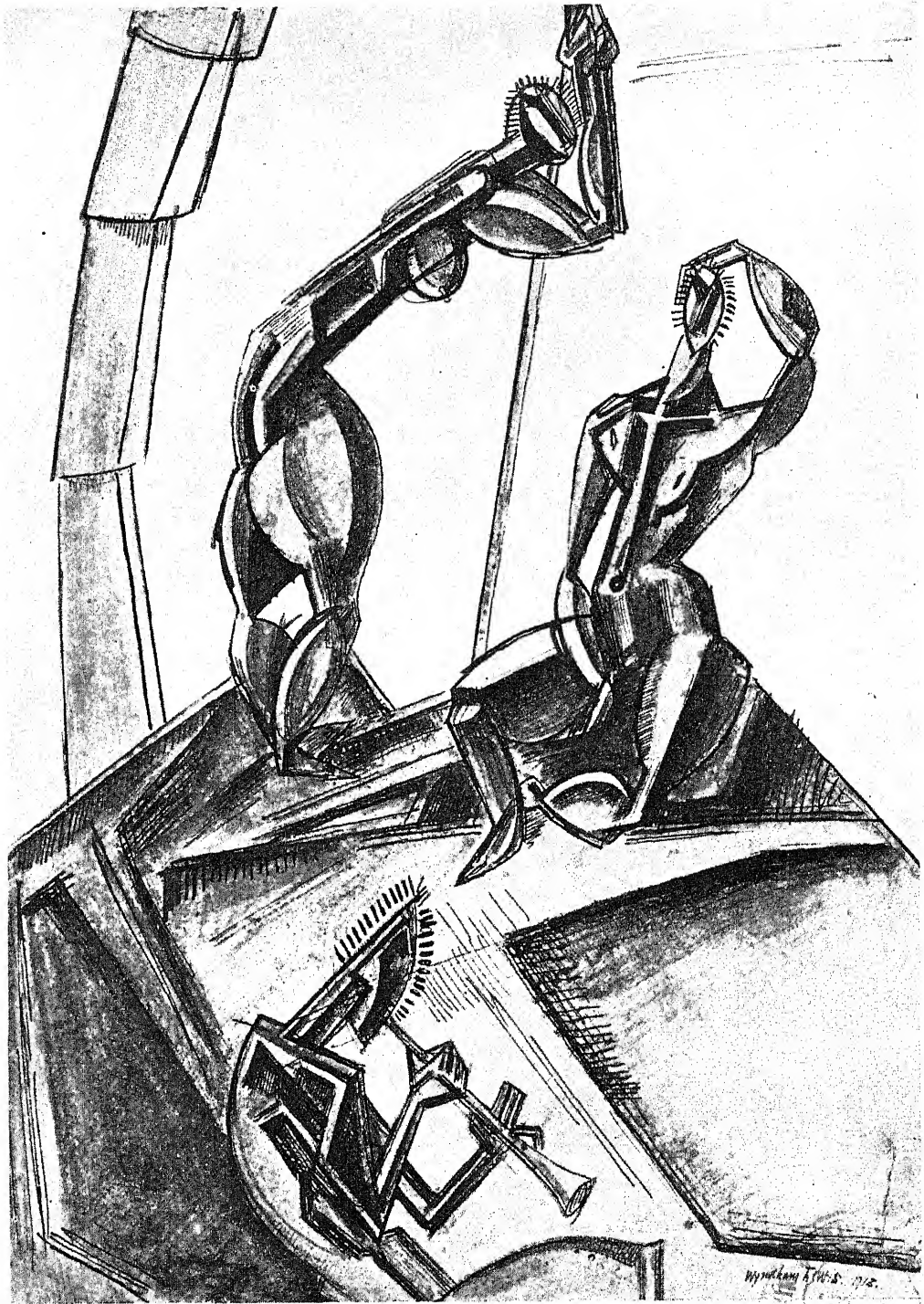
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PAUL NASH: *Stone Forest*





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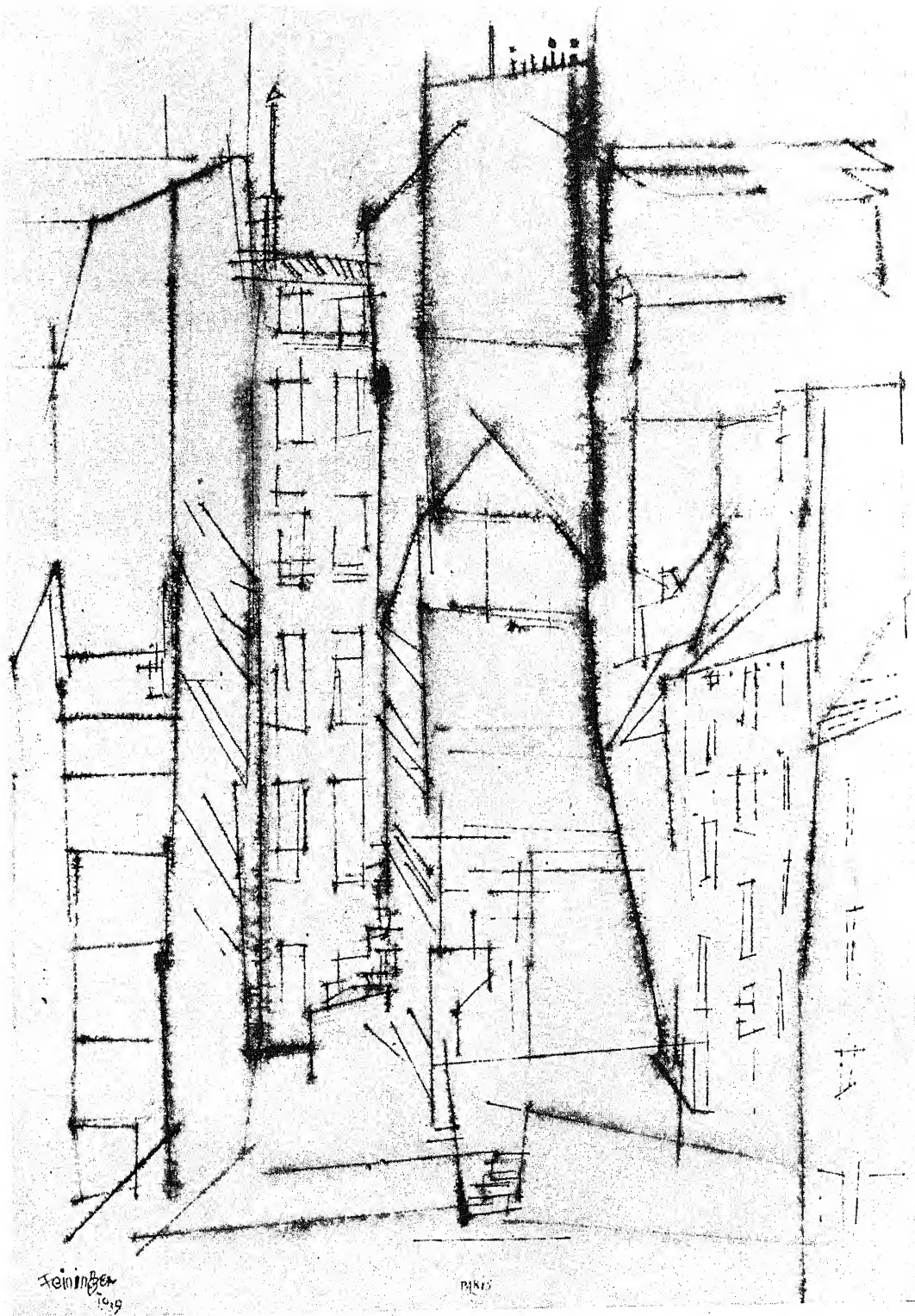




NOLDE: *Two Heads*







FEININGER: *Paris*



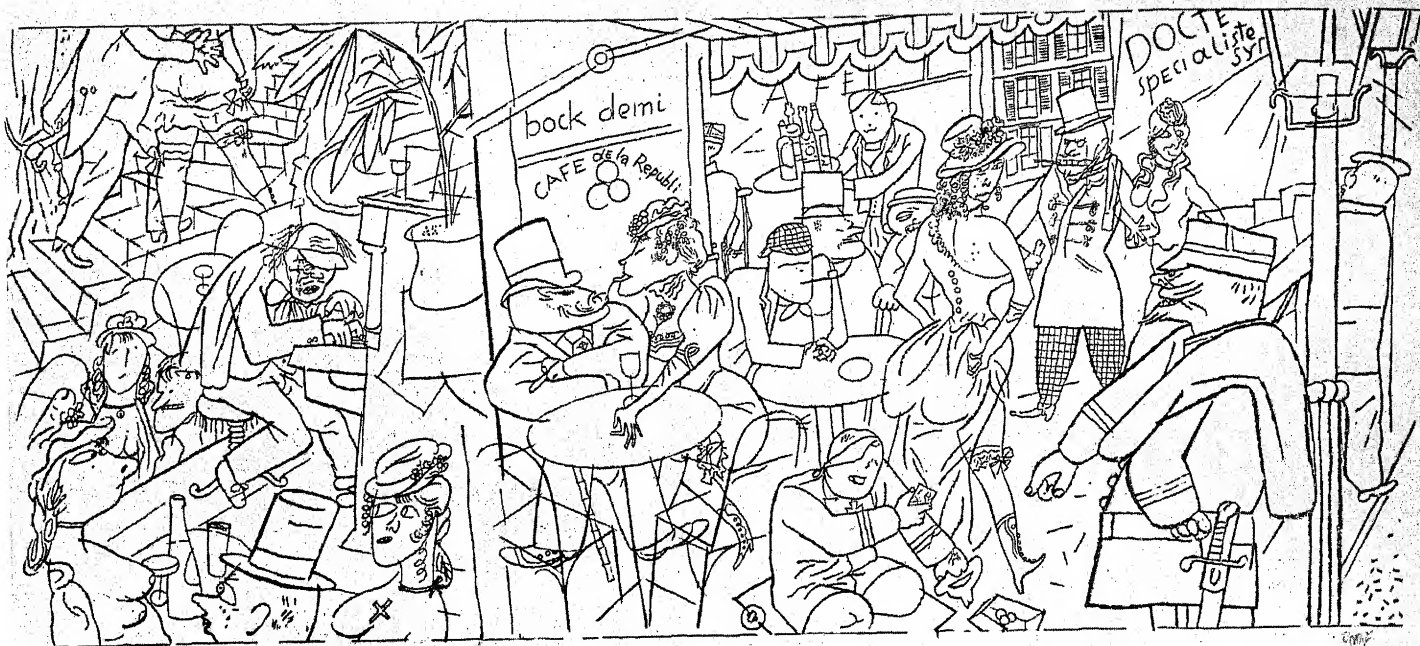








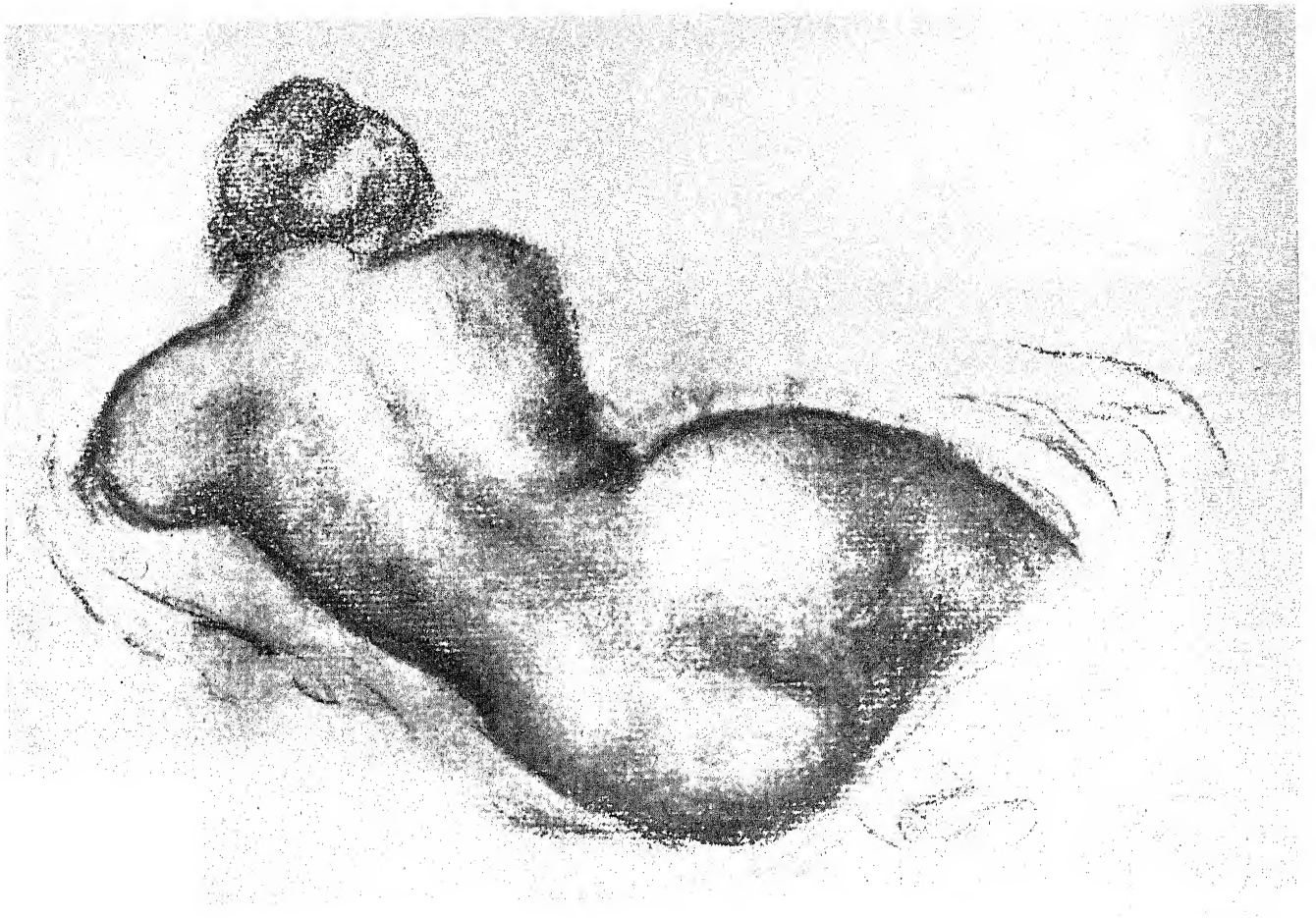
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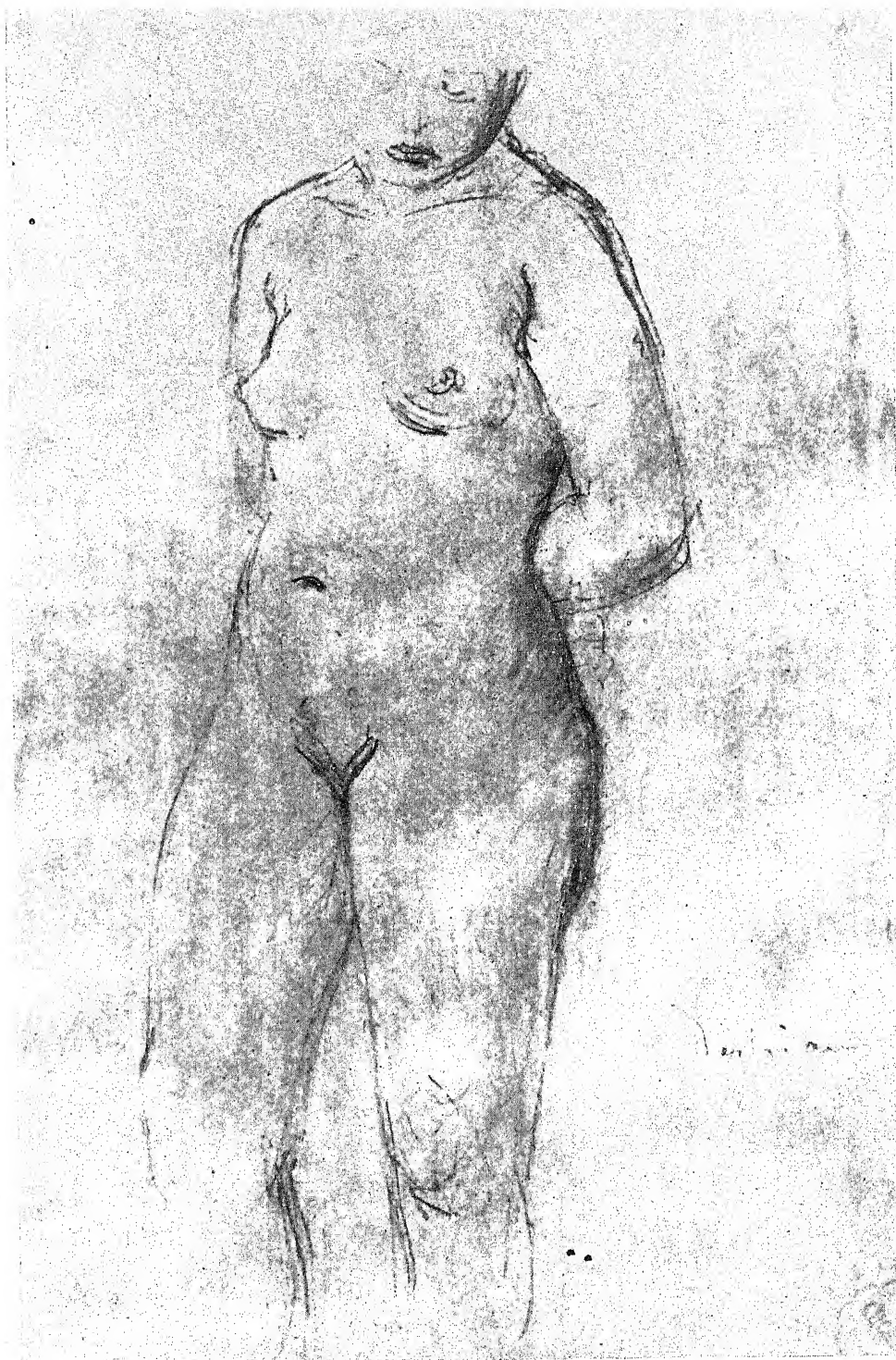
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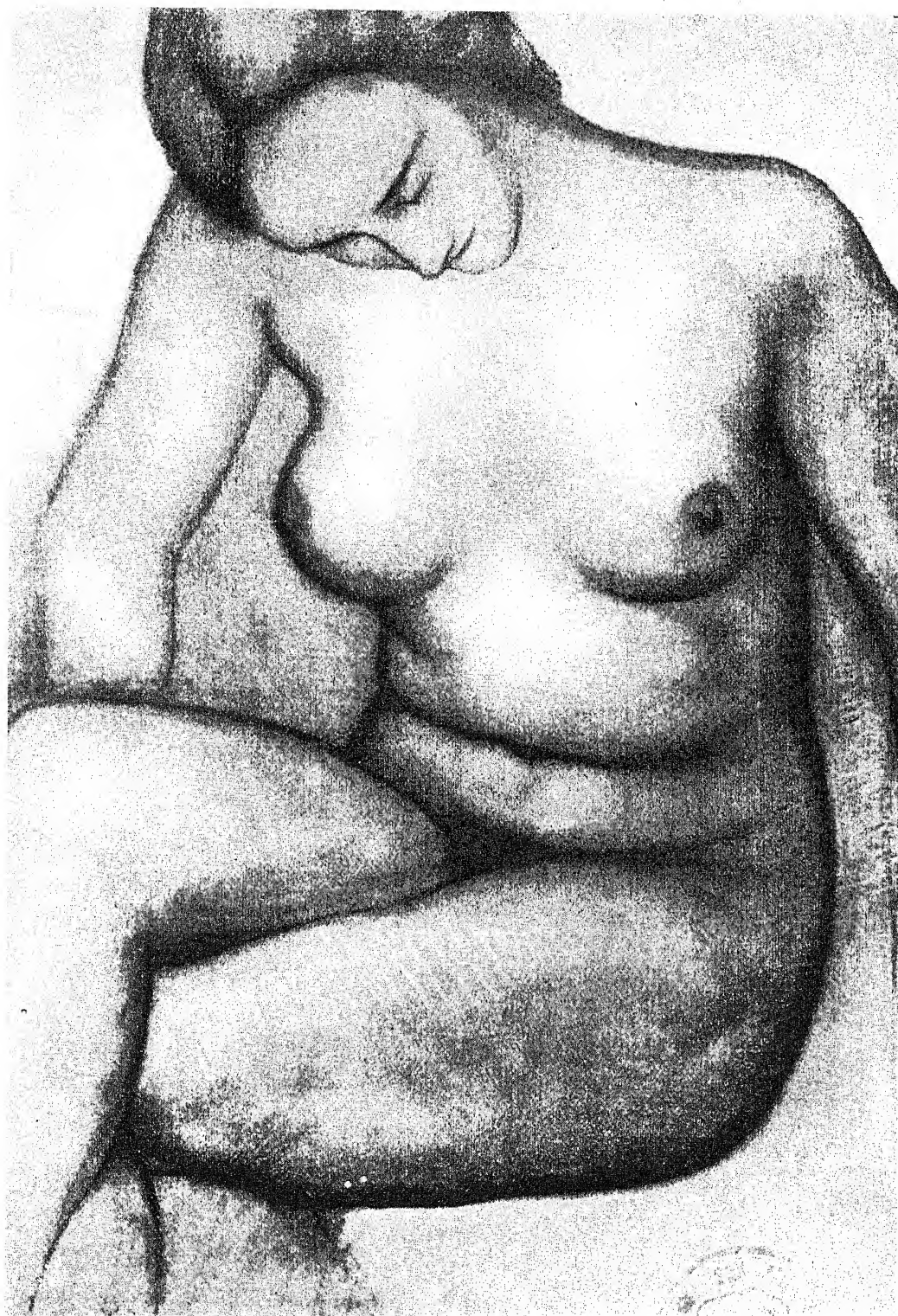




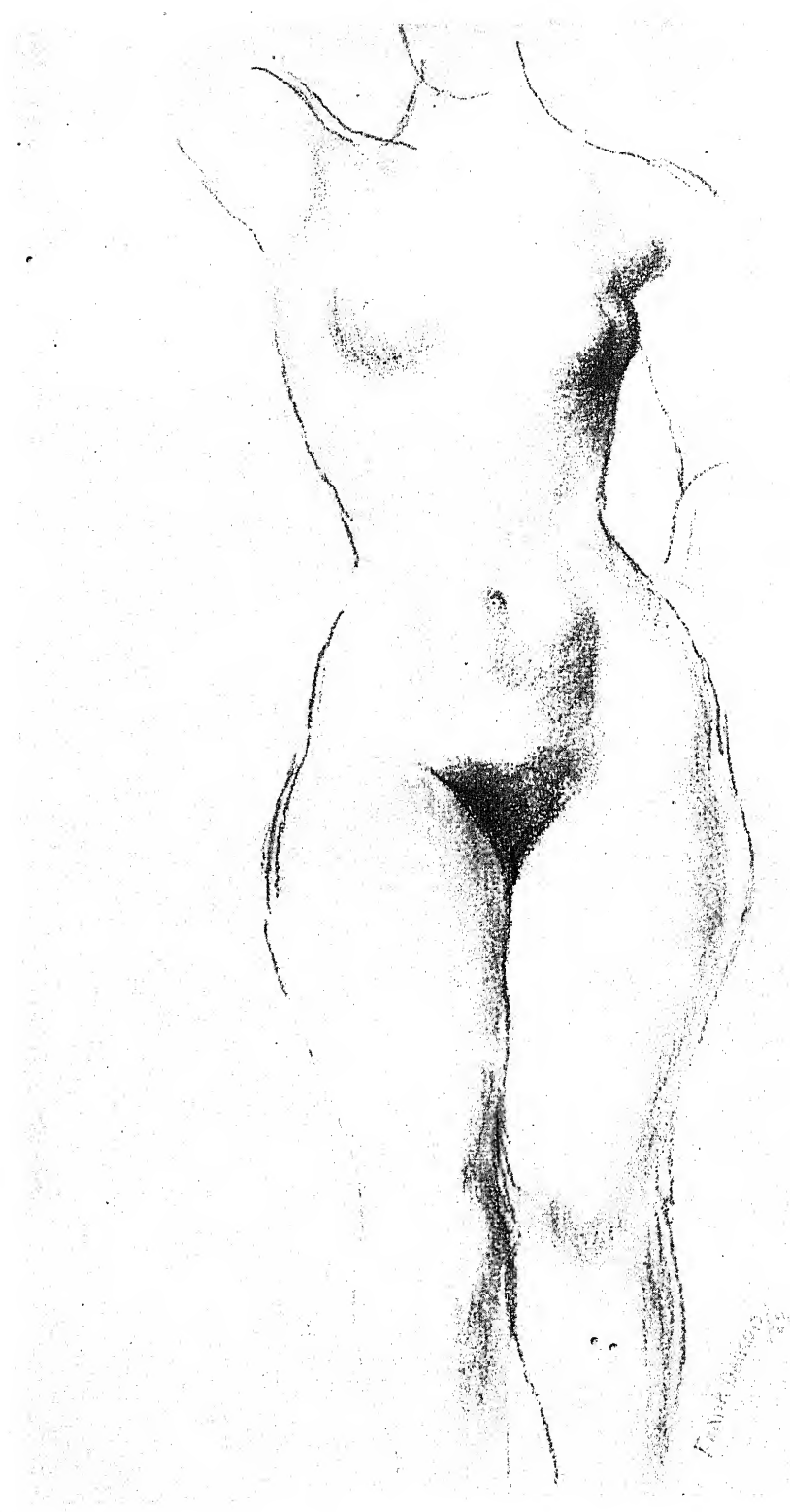
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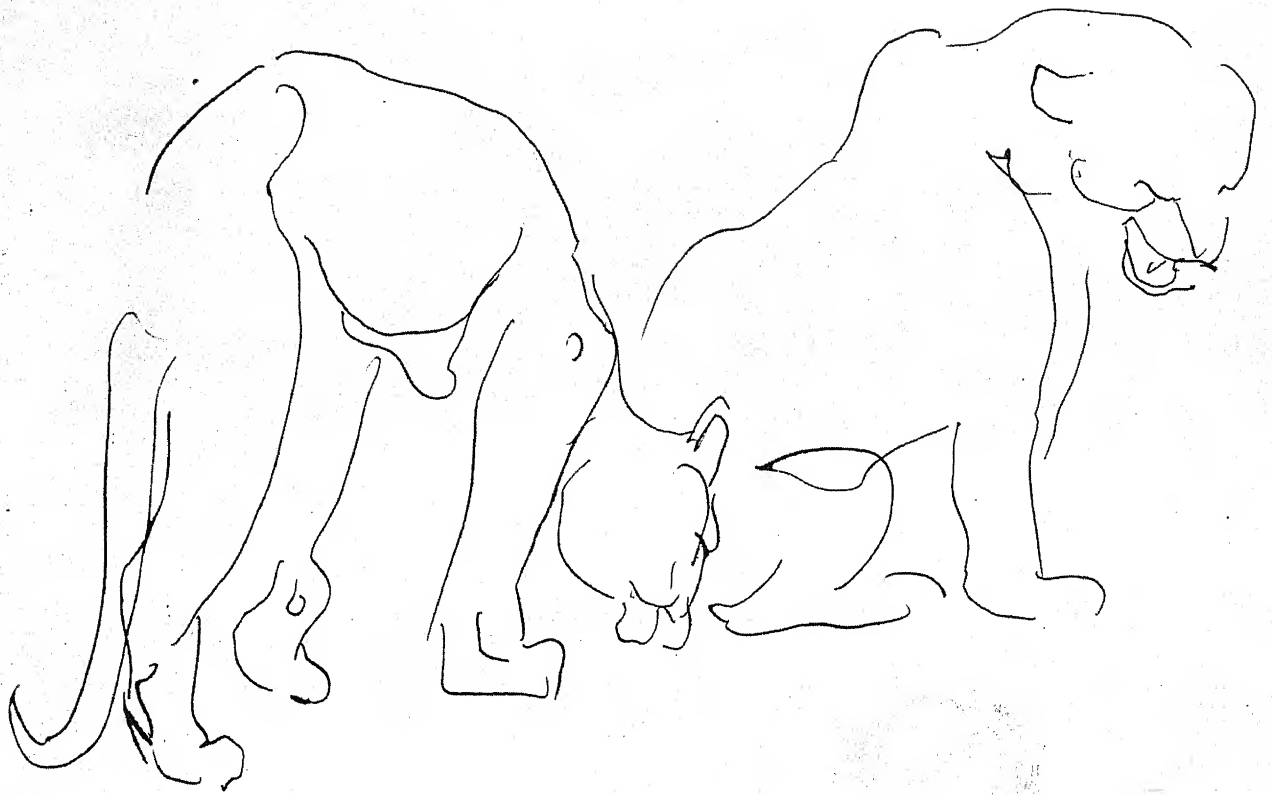
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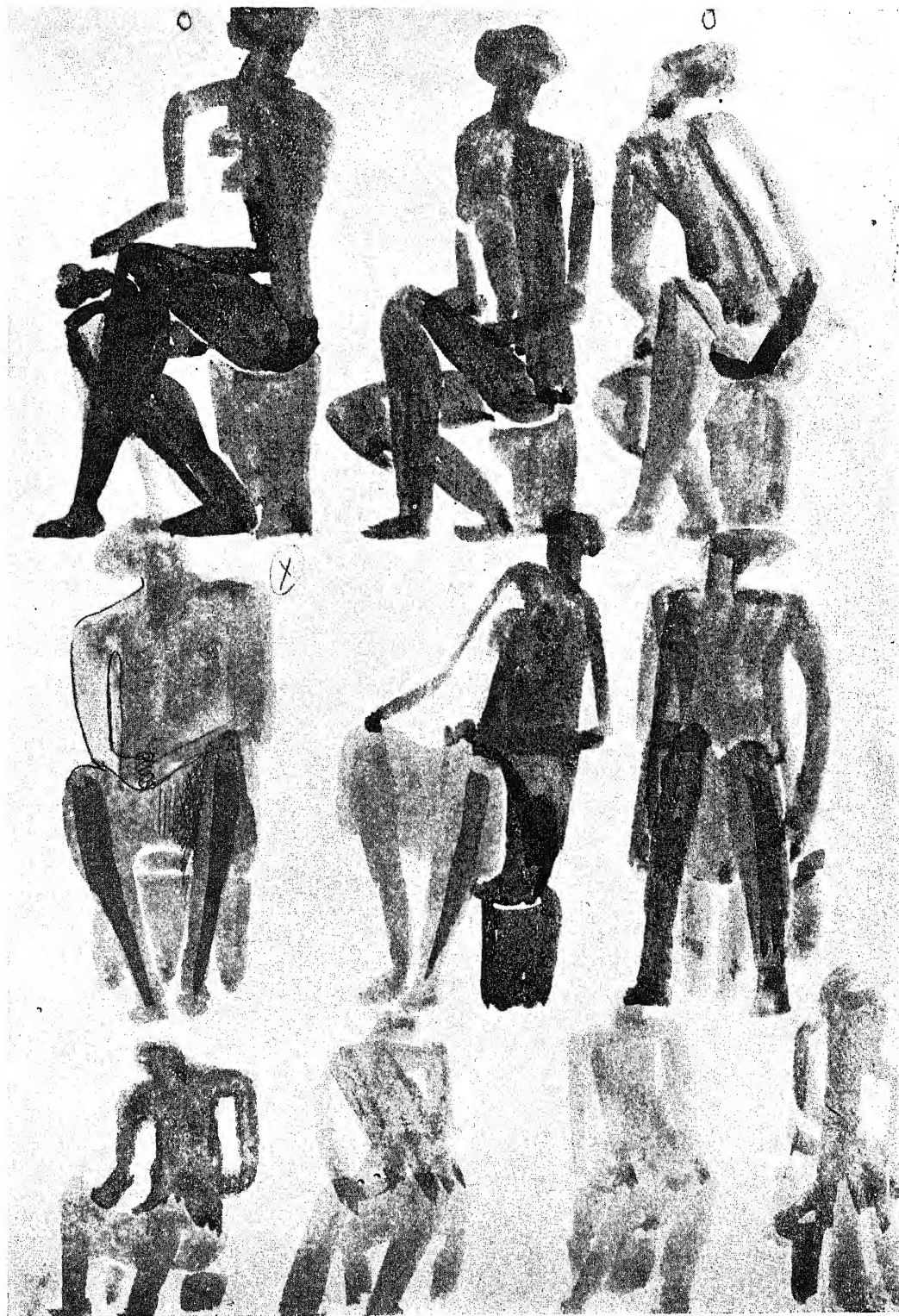




DESPIAU: *Recumbent Female Nude*

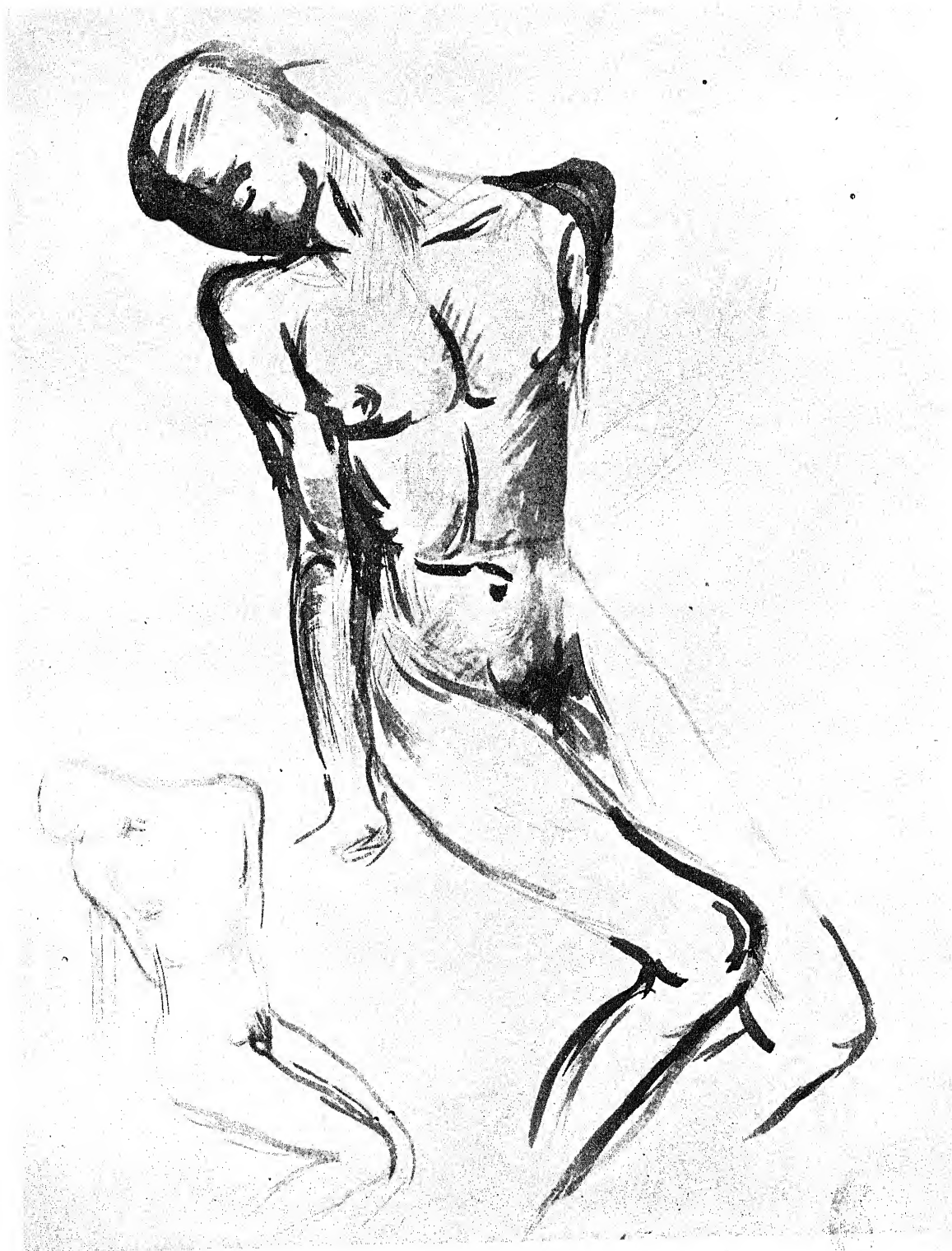


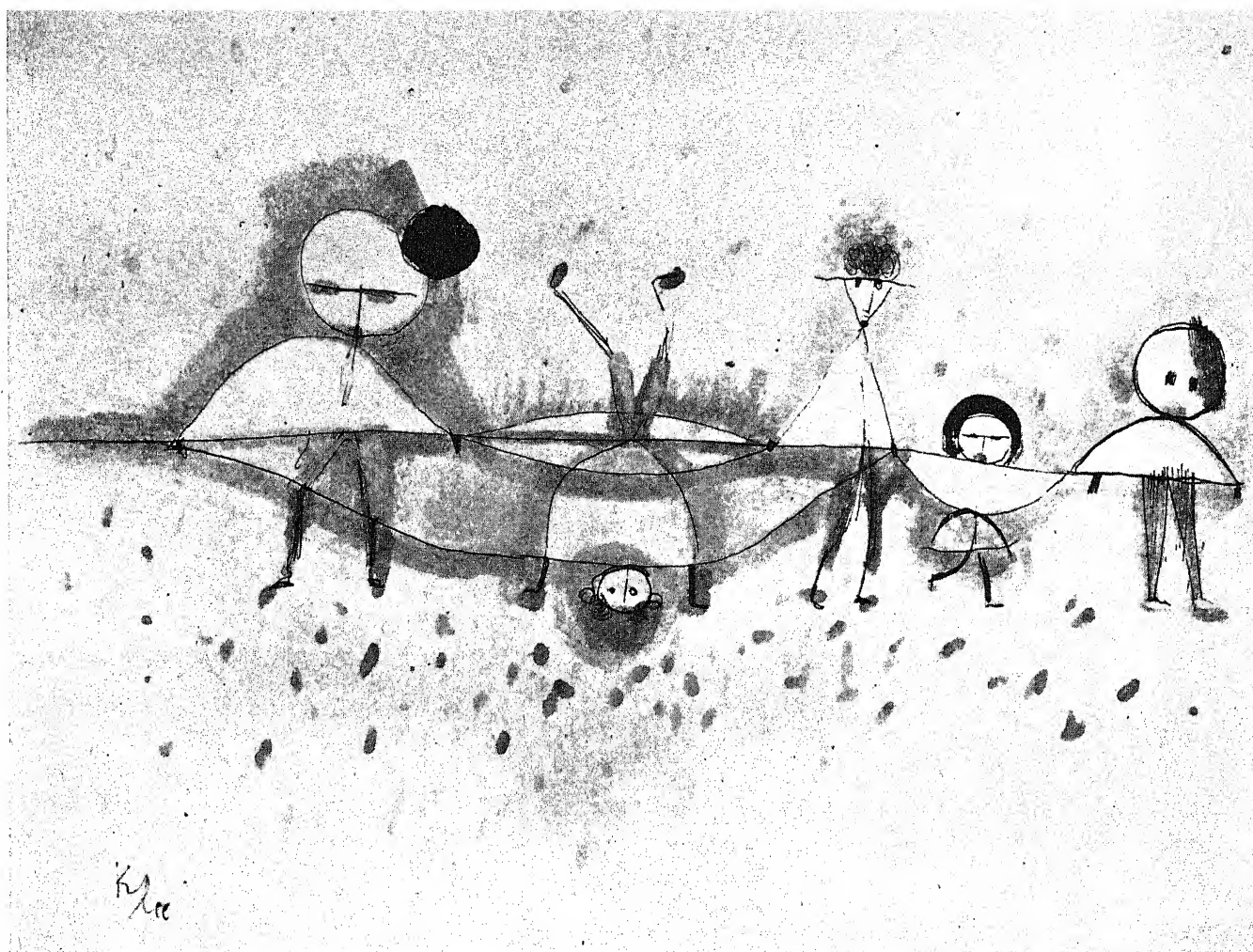




HENRY MOORE: *Seated Figures: studies for sculpture*



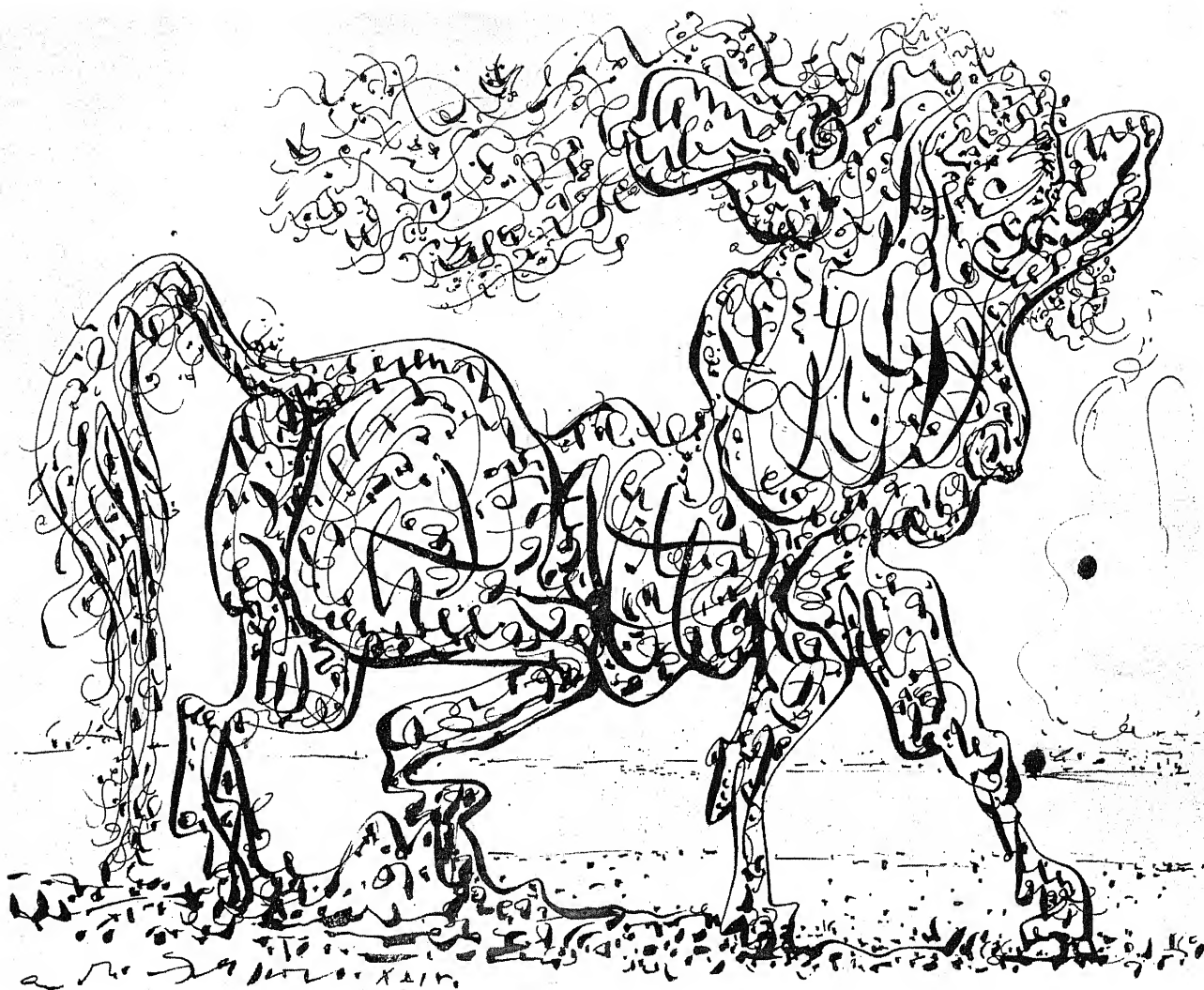




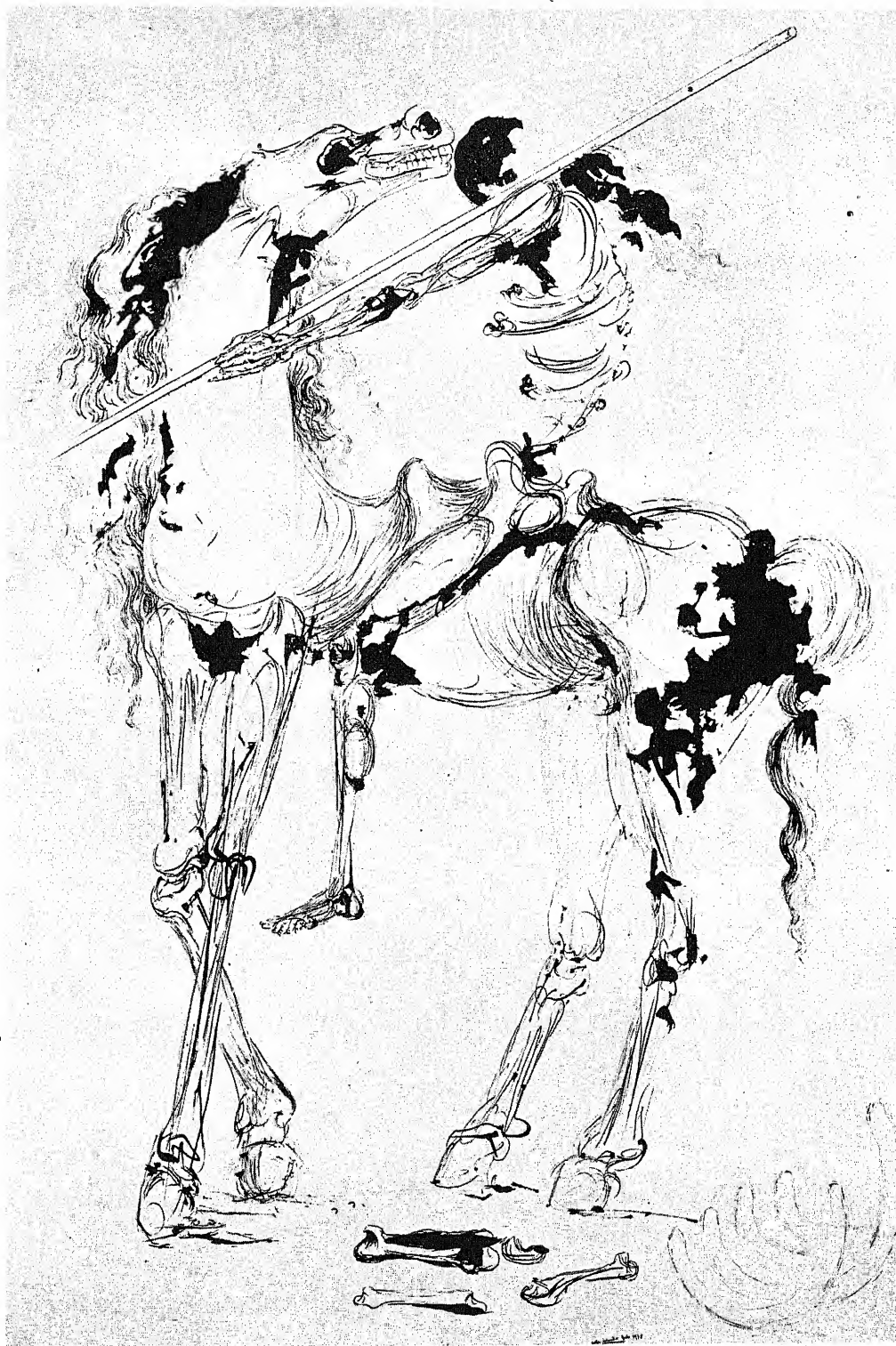




CHIRICO: *The Mathematicians*

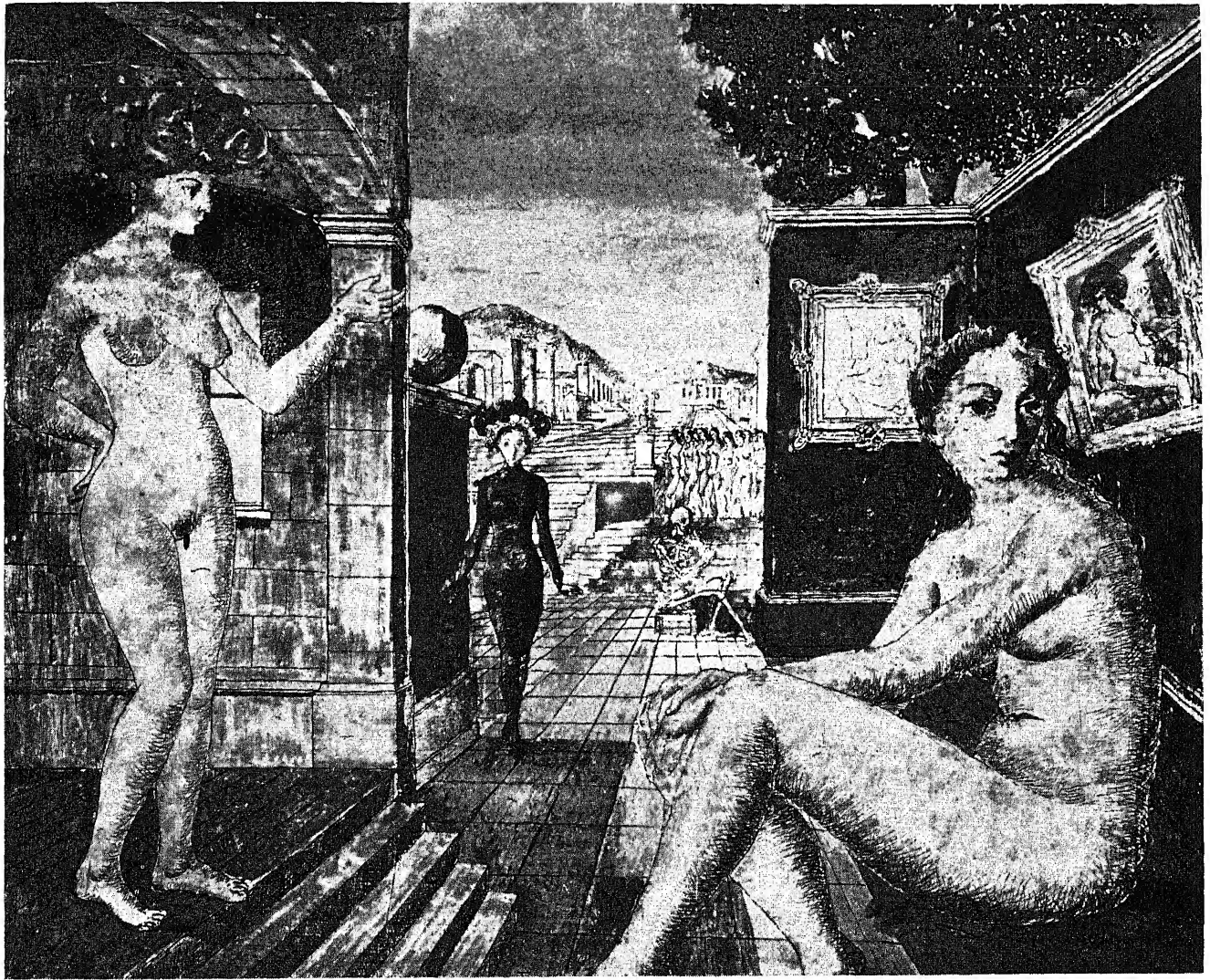






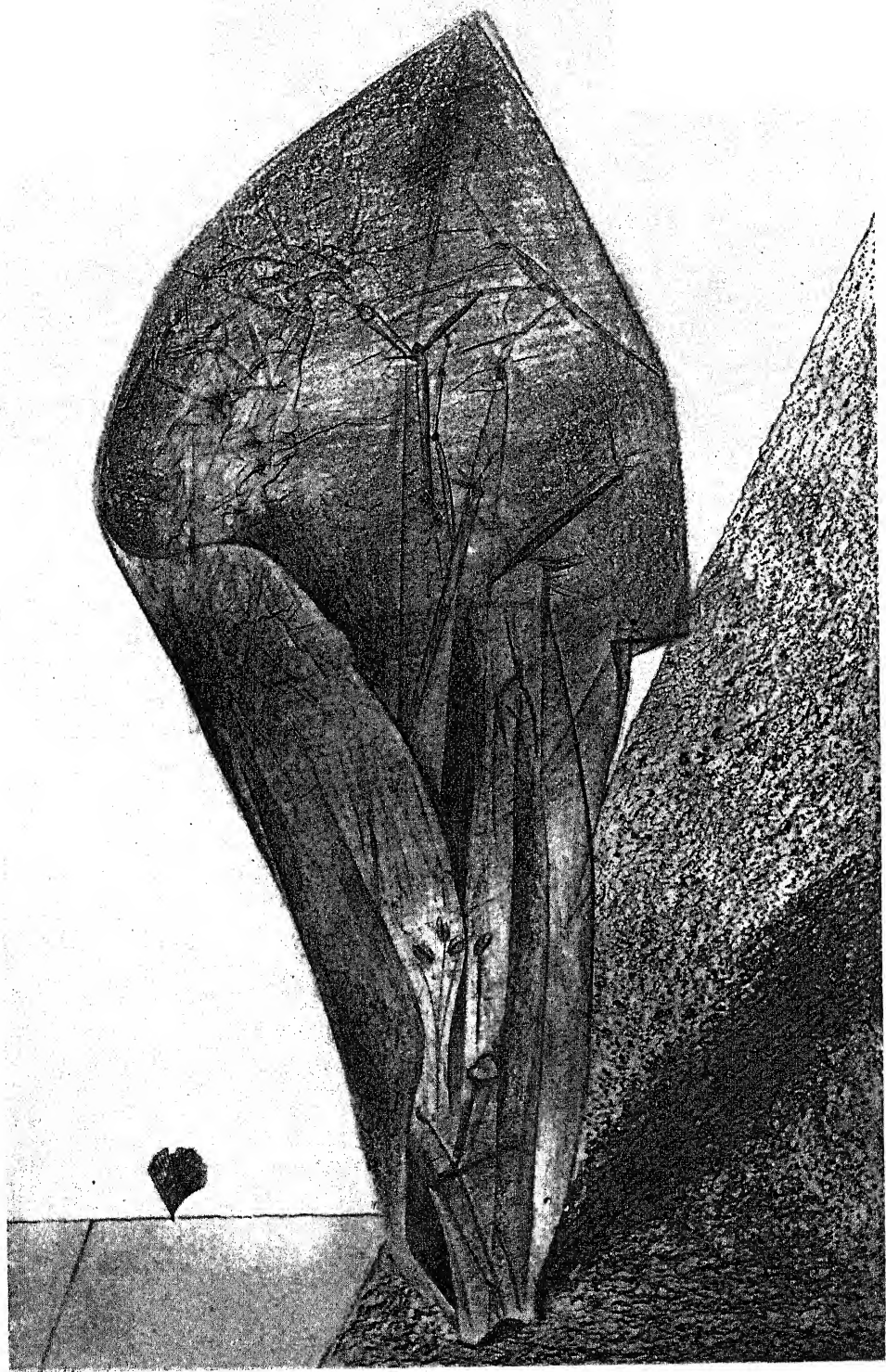
SALVADOR DALÍ: *Cavalier of Death*

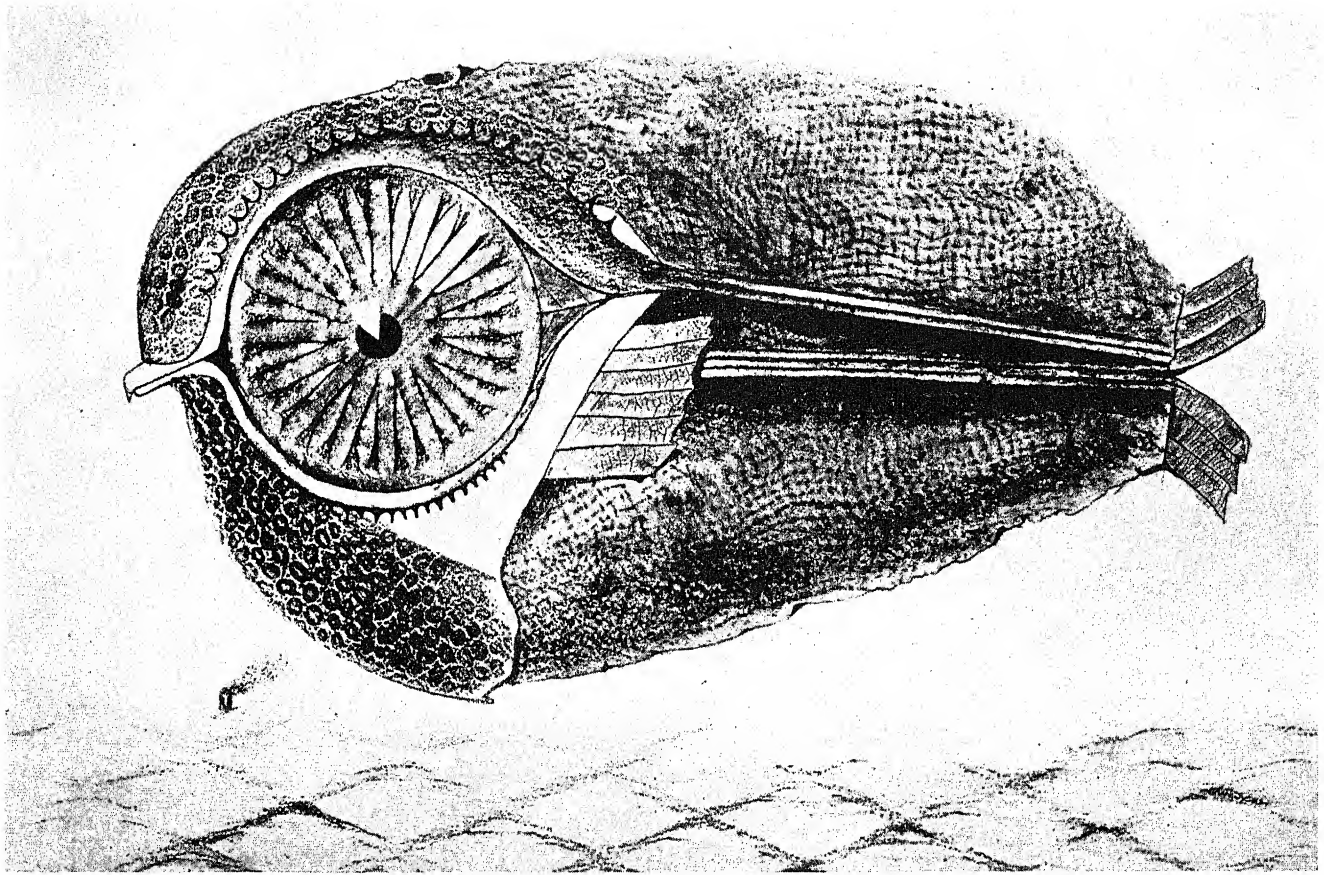




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PAUL KLEE: *The Incredulous Smile*